BOOK IV

HOW RAPID is our journey on this earth! The first quarter of life has been lived before one knows the use of it. The last quarter is lived when one has ceased to enjoy it. At first we do not know how to live; soon we can no longer live; and in the interval which separates these two useless extremities, three-quarters of the time remaining to us is consumed by sleep, work, pain, constraint, and efforts of all kinds. Life is short, not so much because it lasts a short time as because we have almost none of that short time for savoring it. The moment of death may well be distant from that of birth, but life is always too short when this space is poorly filled.

We are, so to speak, born twice: once to exist and once to live; once for our species and once for our sex. Those who regard women as an imperfect man are doubtless wrong, but the external analogy is on their side. Up to the nubile age children of the two sexes have nothing apparent to distinguish them: the same visage, the same figure, the same complexion, the same voice. Everything is equal: girls are children, boys are children; the same name suffices for beings so much alike. Males whose ulterior sexual development is prevented maintain this similarity their whole lives; they are always big children. And women, since they never lose this same similarity, seem in many respects never to be anything else.

But man in general is not made to remain always in childhood. He leaves it at the time prescribed by nature; and this moment of crisis, although rather short, has far-reaching influences.

As the roaring of the sea precedes a tempest from afar, this stormy revolution is proclaimed by the murmur of the nascent passions. A mute fermentation warns of danger's approach. A change in humor, frequent anger, a mind in constant agitation, makes the child almost unmanageable. He becomes deaf to the voice which made him docile. His feverishness turns him into a lion. He disregards his guide; he no longer wishes to be governed.

To the moral signs of a deteriorating humor are joined noticeable

changes in his looks. His face develops expression and takes on character. The sparse and soft cotton growing on the lower part of his cheeks darkens and gains consistency. His voice breaks or, rather, he loses it; he is neither child nor man and can take the tone of neither. His eyes, those organs of the soul which have said nothing up to now, find a language and acquire expressiveness. A nascent fire animates them; their glances, more lively, still have a holy innocence, but they no longer have their first imbecility. He senses already that they can say too much; he begins to know how to lower them and to blush. He becomes sensitive before knowing what he is sensing. He is uneasy without reason for being so. All this can come slowly and still leave you time. But if his vivacity makes him too impatient; if his anger changes into fury; if he is irritable and then tender from one moment to the next; if he sheds tears without cause; if, when near objects which begin to become dangerous for him, his pulse rises and his eye is inflamed; if the hand of a woman placed on his makes him shiver; if he gets flustered or is intimidated near her—Ulysses, O wise Ulysses, be careful. The goatskins you closed with so much care are open. The winds are already loose. No longer leave the tiller for an instant, or all is lost.[1]

This is the second birth of which I have spoken. It is now that man is truly born to life and now that nothing human is foreign to him. Up to now our care has only been a child's game. It takes on true importance only at present. This period, when ordinary educations end, is properly the one when ours ought to begin. But to present this new plan well, let us treat more fundamentally the state of the things which relate to it.

Our passions are the principal instruments of our preservation. It is, therefore, an enterprise as vain as it is ridiculous to want to destroy them—it is to control nature, it is to reform the work of God. If God were to tell men to annihilate the passions which He gives him, God would will and not will; He would contradict Himself. Never did He give this senseless order. Nothing of the kind is written in the human heart. And what God wants a man to do, He does not have told to him by another man. He tells it to him Himself; He writes it in the depths of his heart.

I would find someone who wanted to prevent the birth of the passions almost as mad as someone who wanted to annihilate them; and those who believed that this was my project up to now would surely have understood me very badly.

But would it be reasoning well to conclude, from the fact that it is in man's nature to have passions, that all the passions that we feel in ourselves and see in others are natural? Their source is natural, it is true. But countless alien streams have swollen it. It is a great river which constantly grows and in which one could hardly find a few drops of its first waters. Our natural passions are very limited. They are the instruments of our freedom; they tend to preserve us. All those which subject us and destroy us come from elsewhere. Nature does not give them to us. We appropriate them to the detriment of nature.

The source of our passions, the origin and the principle of all the others, the only one born with man and which never leaves him so long

as he lives is self-love—a primitive, innate passion, which is anterior to every other, and of which all others are in a sense only modifications. In this sense, if you wish, all passions are natural. But most of these modifications have alien causes without which they would never have come to pass; and these same modifications, far from being advantageous for us, are harmful. They alter the primary goal and are at odds with their own principle. It is then that man finds himself outside of nature and sets himself in contradiction with himself.

The love of oneself is always good and always in conformity with order. Since each man is specially entrusted with his own preservation, the first and most important of his cares is and ought to be to watch over it constantly. And how could he watch over it if he did not take the greatest interest in it?

Therefore, we have to love ourselves to preserve ourselves; and it follows immediately from the same sentiment that we love what preserves us. Every child is attached to his nurse. Romulus must have been attached to the wolf that suckled him. At first this attachment is purely mechanical. What fosters the well-being of an individual attracts him; what harms him repels him. This is merely a blind instinct. What transforms this instinct into sentiment, attachment into love, aversion into hate, is the intention manifested to harm us or to be useful to us. One is never passionate about insensible beings which merely follow the impulsion given to them. But those from whom one expects good or ill by their inner disposition, by their will—those we see acting freely for us or against us—inspire in us sentiments similar to those they manifest toward us. We seek what serves us, but we love what wants to serve us. We flee what harms us, but we hate what wants to harm us.

A child's first sentiment is to love himself; and the second, which derives from the first, is to love those who come near him, for in the state of weakness that he is in, he does not recognize anyone except by the assistance and care he receives. At first the attachment he has for his nurse and his governess is only habit. He seeks them because he needs them and is well off in having them; it is recognition rather than benevolence. He needs much time to understand that not only are they useful to him but they want to be; and it is then that he begins to love them.

A child is therefore naturally inclined to benevolence, because he sees that everything approaching him is inclined to assist him; and from this observation he gets the habit of a sentiment favorable to his species. But as he extends his relations, his needs, and his active or passive dependencies, the sentiment of his connections with others is awakened and produces the sentiment of duties and preferences. Then the child becomes imperious, jealous, deceitful, and vindictive. If he is bent to obedience, he does not see the utility of what he is ordered, and he attributes it to caprice, to the intention of tormenting him; and he revolts. If he is obeyed, as soon as something resists him, he sees in it a rebellion, an intention to resist him. He beats the chair or the table for having disobeyed him. Self-love, which regards only ourselves, is contented when our true needs are satisfied. But *amour-propre*, which makes comparisons, is never content and never could

be, because this sentiment, preferring ourselves to others, also demands others to prefer us to themselves, which is impossible. This is how the gentle and affectionate passions are born of self-love, and how the hateful and irascible passions are born of *amour-propre*. Thus what makes man essentially good is to have few needs and to compare himself little to others; what makes him essentially wicked is to have many needs and to depend very much on opinion. On the basis of this principle it is easy to see how all the passions of children and men can be directed to good or bad. It is true that since they are not able always to live alone, it will be difficult for them always to be good. This same difficulty will necessarily increase with their relations; and this, above all, is why the dangers of society make art and care all the more indispensable for us to forestall in the human heart the depravity born of their new needs.

The study suitable for man is that of his relations. So long as he knows himself only in his physical being, he ought to study himself in his relations with things. This is the job of his childhood. When he begins to sense his moral being, he ought to study himself in his relations with men. This is the job of his whole life, beginning from the point we have now reached.[2]

As soon as man has need of a companion, he is no longer an isolated being. His heart is no longer alone. All his relations with his species, all the affections of his soul are born with this one. His first passion soon makes the others ferment.

The inclination of instinct is indeterminate. One sex is attracted to the other; that is the movement of nature. Choice, preferences, and personal attachments are the work of enlightenment, prejudice, and habit. Time and knowledge are required to make us capable of love. One loves only after having judged; one prefers only after having compared. These judgments are made without one's being aware of it, but they are nonetheless real. True love, whatever is said of it, will always be honored by men; for although its transports lead us astray, although it does not exclude odious qualities from the heart that feels it—and even produces them—it nevertheless always presupposes estimable qualities without which one would not be in a condition to feel it. This choosing, which is held to be the opposite of reason, comes to us from it. Love has been presented as blind because it has better eyes than we do and sees relations we are not able to perceive. For a man who had no idea of merit or beauty, every woman would be equally good, and the first comer would always be the most lovable. Far from arising from nature, love is the rule and the bridle of nature's inclinations. It is due to love that, except for the beloved object, one sex ceases to be anything for the other.

One wants to obtain the preference that one grants. Love must be reciprocal. To be loved, one has to make oneself lovable. To be preferred, one has to make oneself more lovable than another, more lovable than every other, at least in the eyes of the beloved object. This is the source of the first glances at one's fellows; this is the source of the first comparisons with them; this is the source of emulation, rivalries, and jealousy. A heart full of an overflowing sentiment likes

to open itself. From the need for a mistress is soon born the need for a friend. He who senses how sweet it is to be loved would want to be loved by everyone; and all could not want preference without there being many malcontents. With love and friendship are born dissensions, enmity, and hate. From the bosom of so many diverse passions I see opinion raising an unshakable throne, and stupid mortals, subjected to its empire, basing their own existence on the judgments of others.

Extend these ideas, and you will see where our *amour-propre* gets the form we believe natural to it, and how self-love, ceasing to be an absolute sentiment, becomes pride in great souls, vanity in small ones, and feeds itself constantly in all at the expense of their neighbors. This species of passion, not having its germ in children's hearts, cannot be born in them of itself; it is we alone who put it there, and it never takes root except by our fault. But this is no longer the case with the young man's heart. Whatever we may do, these passions will be born in spite of us. It is therefore time to change method.

Let us begin with some important reflections on the critical state we are dealing with here. The transition from childhood to puberty is not so determined by nature that it does not vary in individuals according to their temperaments and in peoples according to their climates. Everyone knows the distinction observable in this regard between hot and cold countries; and each of us sees that ardent temperaments are formed sooner than others. But one can be deceived as to the causes and can often attribute to physical causes what must be imputed to moral ones. This is one of the most frequent abuses committed by the philosophy of our age. Nature's instruction is late and slow; men's is almost always premature. In the former case the senses wake the imagination; in the latter the imagination wakes the senses; it gives them a precocious activity which cannot fail to enervate and weaken individuals first and in the long run the species itself. An observation more general and more certain than that of the effect of climates is that puberty and sexual potency always arrive earlier in learned and civilized peoples than in ignorant and barbarous peoples.* Children have a singular sagacity in discerning the bad morals covered over by all the apish posturings of propriety. The purified language dictated to them, the lessons of decency given to them, the veil of mystery that is supposed to be drawn over their eyes, are only so many spurs to their curiosity. From the way this is gone about it is clear that

* "In the cities," says M. de Buffon, "and among the well-to-do, accustomed to abundant and succulent foods, children come to this state sooner. In the country and among poor people the children are slower because they are badly and too little fed. They need two or three years more." [*Histoire naturelle*, vol. IV, p. 238.] I accept the observation but not the explanation, since in countries where villagers are very well fed and eat a lot, as in the Valois, and even in certain mountainous cantons of Italy, like Friuli, the age of puberty in the two sexes is also later than in the bosom of cities where, to satisfy vanity, an extreme parsimony governs spending on food and where most people have, as the proverb says, "velvet robes and stomachs filled with bran." One is surprised in these mountains to see big boys, as strong as men, who still have high voices and beardless chins, and big girls, otherwise quite developed, who do not have the periodic sign of their sex. This difference appears to me to come solely from the fact that, due to the simplicity of their morals, their imagination, peaceful and calm for a longer time, causes their blood to ferment later and makes their temperament less precocious.

the pretense of hiding something from them serves only to teach them about it; of all the instruction given them, this is the one of which they take most advantage.

Consult experience. You will understand to what extent this senseless method accelerates nature's work and ruins the temperament. This is one of the principal causes of the degeneracy of the races in cities. The young people, exhausted early, remain small, weak, and ill-formed; they age instead of growing, as the vine that has been made to bear fruit in the spring languishes and dies before autumn.

It is necessary to have lived among coarse and simple peoples to know up to what age a happy ignorance can prolong the innocence of children there. It is a spectacle that is at the same time touching and laughable to see the two sexes, abandoned to the security of their hearts, prolong in the flower of age and beauty the naïve games of childhood and show by their very familiarity the purity of their pleasures. When finally these amiable young people come to marriage, the two spouses give each other the first fruits of their persons and are thereby dearer to one another. Multitudes of healthy and robust children become the pledges of an incorruptible union and the fruit of the prudence of their parents' early years.

If the age at which man acquires knowledge of his sex differs as much due to the effect of education as to the action of nature, it follows that this age can be accelerated or retarded according to the way in which children are raised; and if the body gains or loses consistency to the extent that this progress is retarded or accelerated, it follows again that the greater the effort made to retard it, the more a young man acquires vigor and force. I am still speaking only of purely physical effects. It will soon be seen that the effects are not limited to these.

From these reflections I draw the solution to the question so often debated—whether it is fitting to enlighten children early concerning the objects of their curiosity, or whether it is better to put them off the trail with little falsehoods? I think one ought to do neither the one nor the other. In the first place, this curiosity does not come to them without someone's having provided the occasion for it. One must therefore act in such a way that they do not have such curiosity. In the second place, questions one is not forced to answer do not require deceiving the child who asks them. It is better to impose silence on him than to answer him by lying. He will be little surprised by this law if care has been taken to subject him to it in inconsequential things. Finally, if one decides to answer, let it be with the greatest simplicity, without mystery, without embarrassment, without a smile. There is much less danger in satisfying the child's curiosity than there is in exciting it.

Let your responses always be solemn, short, and firm, without ever appearing to hesitate. I do not need to add that they ought to be true. One cannot teach children the danger of lying to men without being aware of the greater danger, on the part of men, of lying to children. A single proved lie told by the master to the child would ruin forever the whole fruit of the education.

An absolute ignorance concerning certain matters is perhaps what

would best suit children. But let them learn early what is impossible to hide from them always. Either their curiosity must not be aroused in any way, or it must be satisfied before the age at which it is no longer without danger. Your conduct with your pupil in this respect depends a great deal on his particular situation, the societies which surround him, the circumstances in which it is expected that he might find himself, etc. It is important here to leave nothing to chance; and if you are not sure of keeping him ignorant of the difference between the sexes until he is sixteen, take care that he learn it before he is ten.

I do not like it when too pure a language is affected with children or when long detours, which they notice, are made to avoid giving things their true names. Good morals in these matters always contain much simplicity, but imaginations soiled by vice make the ear delicate and force a constant refinement of expression. Coarse terms are inconsequential; it is lascivious ideas which must be kept away.

Although modesty is natural to the human species, naturally children have none. Modesty is born only with the knowledge of evil, and how could children, who do not and should not have this knowledge, have the sentiment which is its effect? To give them lessons in modesty and decency is to teach them that there are shameful and indecent things. It is to give them a secret desire to know those things. Sooner or later they succeed, and the first spark which touches the imagination inevitably accelerates the inflammation of the senses. Whoever blushes is already guilty. True innocence is ashamed of nothing.

Children do not have the same desires as men; but since they are just as subject to uncleanness offensive to the senses, they can from that very subjection get the same lessons in propriety. Follow the spirit of nature which, by putting in the same place the organs of the secret pleasures and those of the disgusting needs, inspires in us the same cares at different ages, now due to one idea, then due to another; in the man due to modesty, in the child due to cleanliness.

I see only one good means of preserving children in their innocence; it is for all those who surround them to respect and to love it. Without that, all the restraint one tries to use with them is sooner or later belied. A smile, a wink, a careless gesture, tells them everything one seeks to hide from them. To learn it, they need only see that one wanted to hide it from them. The delicacy of the turns of phrase and of the expressions which polite people use with one another is completely misplaced in relation to children since it assumes an enlightenment they ought not to have; but when one truly honors their simplicity, one easily takes on, in speaking to them, the simplicity of the terms which suit them. There is a certain naïveté of language which fits and pleases innocence. This is the true tone which turns a child away from a dangerous curiosity. In speaking simply to him about everything, one does not let him suspect that anything remains to be told him. In joining to coarse words the displeasing ideas suitable to them, the first fire of imagination is smothered. He is not forbidden to pronounce these words and to have these ideas; but without his being aware of it, he is made to have a repugnance against recalling them. And how much embarrassment this naïve freedom spares those who, drawing such freedom from

their own hearts, always say what should be said and always say just what they feel!

"Where do children come from?" An embarrassing question which comes naturally enough to children, and to which an indiscreet or a prudent answer is sometimes decisive for their morals and their health for their whole lives. The most expeditious way that a mother can imagine for putting it off without deceiving her son is to impose silence on him. That would be good if one had accustomed him to it for a long time in regard to unimportant questions and he did not suspect mysteries in this new tone. But rarely does she leave it at that. "That's the secret of married people," she will tell him. "Little boys shouldn't be so curious." This is very good for getting the mother out of trouble. But she should know that the little boy, stung by this contemptuous air, will not have a moment's rest before he has learned the secret of married people, and that he will not be long in learning it.

Permit me to report a very different answer which I heard given to the same question, one which was all the more striking as it came from a woman as modest in her speech as in her manners. When necessary, however, she knew how to trample on the false fear of blame and the vain remarks of mockers for the sake of virtue and her son's good. Not long before the child had passed in his urine a little stone which had torn his urethera but had been forgotten when the illness passed. "Mama," said the giddy little fellow, "where do children come from?" "My child," answered the mother without hesitation, "women piss them out with pains which sometimes cost them their lives." Let madmen laugh and fools be scandalized; but let the wise consider whether they can ever find a more judicious answer or one that better achieves its purposes.

In the first place, the idea of a need which is natural and known to the child turns aside that of a mysterious process. The accessory ideas of pain and death cover this process with a veil of sadness which deadens the imagination and represses curiosity. Everything turns the mind toward the consequences of the delivery and not toward its causes. The infirmities of human nature, distasteful objects, images of suffering—these are the clarifications to which this answer leads, if the repugnance it inspires permits the child to ask for them. How will the restlessness of the desires be awakened in conversations thus directed? And, nevertheless, you see that the truth has not been adulterated and there was no need to take advantage of one's pupil instead of instructing him.

Your children read. From their reading they get knowledge they would not have if they had not read. If they study, the imagination catches fire and intensifies in the silence of their rooms. If they live in society, they hear odd talk; they see things that strike them. They have been well persuaded that they are men; therefore, whatever men do in their presence serves as the occasion for them to investigate how it applies to them. The actions of others must surely serve as models for them when the judgments of others serve as laws for them. The domestics who are made dependent on them, and are consequently interested in pleasing them, pay their court to them at the expense of

good morals. Laughing governesses make remarks to them at four which the most brazen women would not dare to make to them at fifteen. Soon the governesses forget what they said, but the children do not forget what they heard. Naughty conversations prepare the way for libertine morals. The rascally lackey debauches the child, and the latter's secret acts as a guarantee for the former's.

The child raised according to his age is alone. He knows no attachments other than those of habit. He loves his sister as he loves his watch, and his friend as his dog. He does not feel himself to be of any sex, of any species. Man and woman are equally alien to him. He does not consider anything they do or say to be related to himself. He neither sees nor hears nor pays any attention to it. Their speeches interest him no more than do the examples they set. All of that is unsuitable for him. It is not an artful untruth which is imparted to him by this method; it is nature's ignorance. The time is coming when this same nature takes care to enlighten its pupil; and it is only then that it has put him in a condition to profit without risk from the lessons it gives him. This is the principle. The detailed rules do not belong to my subject, and the means I propose with a view to other goals serve also as examples for this one.

Do you wish to put order and regularity in the nascent passions? Extend the period during which they develop in order that they have the time to be arranged as they are born. Then it is not man who orders them; it is nature itself. Your care is only to let it arrange its work. If your pupil were alone, you would have nothing to do. But everything surrounding him influences his imagination. The torrent of prejudices carries him away. To restrain him, he must be pushed in the opposite direction. Sentiment must enchain imagination, and reason silence the opinion of men. The source of all the passions is sensibility; imagination determines their bent. Every being who has a sense of his relations ought to be affected when these relations are altered, and he imagines, or believes he imagines, others more suitable to his nature. It is the errors of imagination which transform into vices the passions of all limited beings—even those of angels, if they have any,[3] for they would have to know the nature of all beings in order to know what relations best suit their nature.

This is, then, the summary of the whole of human wisdom in the use of the passions: (1) To have a sense of the true relations of man, with respect to the species as well as the individual. (2) To order all the affections of the soul according to these relations.

But is man the master of ordering his affections according to this or that relation? Without a doubt, if he is master of directing his imagination toward this or that object or of giving it this or that habit. Besides, the issue here is less what a man can do for himself than what we can do for our pupil by the choice of circumstances in which we put him. To set forth the proper means for keeping him in the order of nature is to say enough about how he can depart from it.

So long as his sensibility remains limited to his own individuality, there is nothing moral in his actions. It is only when it begins to extend outside of himself that it takes on, first, the sentiments and, then, the

notions of good and evil which truly constitute him as a man and an integral part of his species. It is on this first point, then, that we must initially fix our observations.

These observations are difficult because, in order to make them, we must reject the examples which are before our eyes and seek for those in which the successive developments take place according to the order of nature.

A mannered, polite, civilized child, who only awaits the power of putting to work the premature instructions he has received, is never mistaken as to the moment when this power has come to him. Far from waiting for it, he accelerates it. He gives a precocious fermentation to his blood. He knows what the object of his desires ought to be long before he even experiences them. It is not nature which excites him; it is he who forces nature. It has nothing more to teach him in making him a man. He was one in thought a long time before being one in fact.

The true course of nature is more gradual and slower. Little by little the blood is inflamed, the spirits are produced, the temperament is formed. The wise worker who directs the manufacture takes care to perfect all his instruments before putting them to work. A long restlessness precedes the first desires; a long ignorance puts them off the track. One desires without knowing what. The blood ferments and is agitated; a superabundance of life seeks to extend itself outward. The eye becomes animated and looks over other beings. One begins to take an interest in those surrounding us; one begins to feel that one is not made to live alone. It is thus that the heart is opened to the human affections and becomes capable of attachment.

The first sentiment of which a carefully raised young man is capable is not love; it is friendship. The first act of his nascent imagination is to teach him that he has fellows; and the species affects him before the female sex. Here is another advantage of prolonged innocence—that of profiting from nascent sensibility to sow in the young adolescent's heart the first seeds of humanity. This advantage is all the more precious since now is the only time of life when the same attentions can have a true success.

I have always seen that young people who are corrupted early and given over to women and debauchery are inhuman and cruel. The heat of their temperaments made them impatient, vindictive, and wild. Their imaginations, filled by a single object, rejected all the rest. They knew neither pity nor mercy. They would have sacrificed fathers, mothers, and the whole universe to the least of their pleasures. On the contrary, a young man raised in a happy simplicity is drawn by the first movements of nature toward the tender and affectionate passions. His compassionate heart is moved by the sufferings of his fellows. He has a thrill of satisfaction at seeing his comrade again; his arms know how to find caressing embraces; his eyes know how to shed tears of tenderness. He is sensitive to the shame of displeasing, to the regret of having offended. If the ardor of his inflamed blood makes him too intense, easily carried away, and angered, a moment later all the goodness of

his heart is seen in the effusion of his repentance. He cries, he moans about the wound he has inflicted. He would want to redeem the blood he has shed with his own. All of his fury is extinguished, all of his pride humiliated before the sentiment of his wrong. Is he offended himself? At the height of his fury, an excuse, a word disarms him. He pardons the injuries of others as gladly as he makes amends for his own. Adolescence is not the age of vengeance or of hate; it is that of commiseration, clemency, and generosity. Yes, I maintain, and I do not fear being contradicted by experience, that a child who is not ill born, and who has preserved his innocence until he is twenty, is at that age the most generous, the best, the most loving and lovable of men. You have never been told anything of the kind. I can well believe it. Your philosophers, raised in all the corruption of the colleges, make no effort to learn this.

It is man's weakness which makes him sociable; it is our common miseries which turn our hearts to humanity; we would owe humanity nothing if we were not men. Every attachment is a sign of insufficiency. If each of us had no need of others, he would hardly think of uniting himself with them. Thus from our very infirmity is born our frail happiness. A truly happy being is a solitary being. God alone enjoys an absolute happiness. But who among us has the idea of it? If some imperfect being could suffice unto himself, what would he enjoy according to us? He would be alone; he would be miserable. I do not conceive how someone who needs nothing can love anything. I do not conceive how someone who loves nothing can be happy.

It follows from this that we are attached to our fellows less by the sentiment of their pleasures than by the sentiment of their pains, for we see far better in the latter the identity of our natures with theirs and the guarantees of their attachment to us. If our common needs unite us by interest, our common miseries unite us by affection. The sight of a happy man inspires in others less love than envy. They would gladly accuse him of usurping a right he does not have in giving himself an exclusive happiness; and *amour-propre* suffers, too, in making us feel that this man has no need of us. But who does not pity the unhappy man whom he sees suffering? Who would not want to deliver him from his ills if it only cost a wish for that? Imagination puts us in the place of the miserable man rather than in that of the happy man. We feel that one of these conditions touches us more closely than the other. Pity is sweet because, in putting ourselves in the place of the one who suffers, we nevertheless feel the pleasure of not suffering as he does. Envy is bitter because the sight of a happy man, far from putting the envious man in his place, makes the envious man regret not being there. It seems that the one exempts us from the ills he suffers, and the other takes from us the goods he enjoys.

Do you wish, then, to excite and nourish in the heart of a young man the first movements of nascent sensibility and turn his character toward beneficence and goodness? Do not put the seeds of pride, vanity, and envy in him by the deceptive image of the happiness of men. Do not expose his eyes at the outset to the pomp of courts, the splendor of

palaces, or the appeal of the theater. Do not take him to the circles of the great, to brilliant assemblies. Show him the exterior of high society only after having put him in a condition to evaluate it in itself. To show him the world before he knows men is not to form him, it is to corrupt him; it is not to instruct him, it is to deceive him.

Men are not naturally kings, or lords, or courtiers, or rich men. All are born naked and poor; all are subject to the miseries of life, to sorrows, ills, needs, and pains of every kind. Finally, all are condemned to death. This is what truly belongs to man. This is what no mortal is exempt from. Begin, therefore, by studying in human nature what is most inseparable from it, what best characterizes humanity.

At sixteen the adolescent knows what it is to suffer, for he has himself suffered. But he hardly knows that other beings suffer too. To see it without feeling it is not to know it; and as I have said a hundred times, the child, not imagining what others feel, knows only his own ills. But when the first development of his senses lights the fire of imagination, he begins to feel himself in his fellows, to be moved by their complaints and to suffer from their pains. It is then that the sad picture of suffering humanity ought to bring to his heart the first tenderness it has ever experienced.

If this moment is not easy to notice in your children, whom do you blame for it? You instruct them so early in playing at sentiment; you teach them its language so soon that, speaking always with the same accent, they turn your lessons against you and leave you no way of distinguishing when they cease to lie and begin to feel what they say. But look at my Emile. At the age to which I have brought him he has neither felt nor lied. Before knowing what it is to love, he has said, "I love you," to no one. The countenance he ought to put on when he goes into the room of his sick father, mother, or governor has not been prescribed to him. He has not been showed the art of affecting sadness he does not feel. He has not feigned tears at the death of anyone, for he does not know what dying is. The same insensibility he has in his heart is also in his manners. Indifferent to everything outside of himself like all other children, he takes an interest in no one. All that distinguishes him is his not caring to appear interested and his not being false like them.

Emile, having reflected little on sensitive beings, will know late what it is to suffer and die. He will begin to have gut reactions at the sounds of complaints and cries, the sight of blood flowing will make him avert his eyes; the convulsions of a dying animal will cause him an ineffable distress before he knows whence come these new movements within him. If he had remained stupid and barbaric, he would not have them; if he were more learned, he would know their source. He has already compared too many ideas to feel nothing and not enough to have a conception of what he feels.

Thus is born pity, the first relative sentiment which touches the human heart according to the order of nature. To become sensitive and pitying, the child must know that there are beings like him who suffer what he has suffered, who feel the pains he has felt, and that there are others whom he ought to conceive of as able to feel them too. In

fact, how do we let ourselves be moved by pity if not by transporting ourselves outside of ourselves and identifying with the suffering animal, by leaving, as it were, our own being to take on its being? We suffer only so much as we judge that it suffers. It is not in ourselves, it is in him that we suffer. Thus, no one becomes sensitive until his imagination is animated and begins to transport him out of himself.

To excite and nourish this nascent sensibility, to guide it or follow it in its natural inclination, what is there to do other than to offer the young man objects on which the expansive force of his heart can act—objects which swell the heart, which extend it to other beings, which make it find itself everywhere outside of itself—and carefully to keep away those which contract and concentrate the heart and tighten the spring of the human *I*? That is, to say it in other terms, to excite in him goodness, humanity, commiseration, beneficence, and all the attractive and sweet passions naturally pleasing to men, and to prevent the birth of envy, covetousness, hate, and all the repulsive and cruel passions which make sensibility, so to speak, not only nothing but negative and torment the man who experiences them.

I believe I can summarize all the preceding reflections in two or three maxims which are precise, clear, and easy to grasp.

First Maxim

It is not in the human heart to put ourselves in the place of people who are happier than we, but only in that of those who are more pitiable.

If one finds exceptions to this maxim they are more apparent than real. Thus one does not put oneself in the place of the rich or noble man to whom one is attached. Even in attaching oneself sincerely, one is only appropriating a part of his well-being. Sometimes one loves him in his misfortunes; but so long as he prospers, he has as a true friend only that man who is not the dupe of appearances, and who pities him more than he envies him, in spite of his prosperity.[4]

We are touched by the happiness of certain conditions—for example, of the rustic and pastoral life. The charm of seeing those good people happy is not poisoned by envy; we are truly interested in them. Why is this? Because we feel that we are the masters of descending to this condition of peace and innocence and of enjoying the same felicity. It is a resource for a rainy day which causes only agreeable ideas, since in order to be able to make use of it, it suffices to want to do so. There is always pleasure in seeing our resources, in contemplating our own goods, even when we do not wish to make use of them.

It follows, therefore, that, in order to incline a young man to humanity, far from making him admire the brilliant lot of others, one must show him the sad sides of that lot, one must make him fear it. Then, by an evident inference, he ought to cut out his own road to happiness, following in no one else's tracks.

Second Maxim

One pities in others only those ills from which one does not feel oneself exempt.

Non ignora mali, miseris succurrere disco.[5]

I know nothing so beautiful, so profound, so touching, so true as this verse.

Why are kings without pity for their subjects? Because they count on never being mere men. Why are the rich so hard toward the poor? It is because they have no fear of becoming poor. Why does the nobility have so great a contempt for the people? It is because a noble will never be a commoner. Why are the Turks generally more humane and more hospitable than we are? It is because, with their totally arbitrary government, which renders the greatness and the fortune of individuals always precarious and unsteady, they do not regard abasement and poverty as a condition alien to them.* Each may be tomorrow what the one whom he helps is today. This reflection, which comes up constantly in Oriental stories, gives them a certain touching quality that all the affectation of our dry moralizing totally lacks.[6]

Do not, therefore, accustom your pupil to regard the sufferings of the unfortunate and the labors of the poor from the height of his glory; and do not hope to teach him to pity them if he considers them alien to him. Make him understand well that the fate of these unhappy men can be his, that all their ills are there in the ground beneath his feet, that countless unforeseen and inevitable events can plunge him into them from one moment to the next. Teach him to count on neither birth nor health nor riches. Show him all the vicissitudes of fortune. Seek out for him examples, always too frequent, of people who, from a station higher than his, have fallen beneath these unhappy men. Whether it is their fault is not now the question. Does he even know what fault is? Never violate the order of his knowledge, and enlighten him only with explanations within his reach. He does not need to be very knowledgeable to sense that all of human prudence is incapable of assuring him whether in an hour he will be living or dying; whether the pain of nephritis will not make him grit his teeth before nightfall; whether in a month he will be rich or poor; whether within a year perhaps he will not be rowing under the lash in the galleys of Algiers. Above all, do not go and tell him all this coldly like his catechism. Let him see, let him feel the human calamities. Unsettle and frighten his imagination with the perils by which every man is constantly surrounded. Let him see around him all these abysses and, hearing you describe them, hold on to you for fear of falling into them. We shall make him timid and cowardly, you will say. We shall see in what follows, but for now let us begin by making him humane. That, above all, is what is important for us?

* This appears to be changing a bit now. The conditions seem to become more fixed; and thus the men become harder.

Third Maxim

The pity one has for another's misfortune is measured not by the quantity of that misfortune but by the sentiment which one attributes to those who suffer it.

One pities an unhappy man only to the extent one believes he is pitiable. The physical sentiment of our ills is more limited than it seems. But it is by means of memory, which makes us feel their continuity, and of imagination, which extends them into the future, that they make us truly pitiable. This, I think, is one of the causes which hardens us more to the ills of animals than to those of men, although the common sensibility ought to make us identify with them equally. One hardly pities a cart horse in his stable because one does not presume that the horse, while eating his hay, thinks of the blows he has received and of the fatigues awaiting him. Neither does one pity a sheep one sees grazing, although one knows it will soon be slaughtered, because one judges that it does not foresee its fate. By analogy one is similarly hardened against the fate of men, and the rich are consoled about the ill they do to the poor, because they assume the latter to be stupid enough to feel nothing of it. In general, I judge the value each sets on the happiness of his fellows by the importance he appears to give them. It is natural that one consider cheap the happiness of people one despises. Do not be surprised, therefore, if political men speak of the people with so much disdain, or if most of the philosophers affect to make man so wicked.

It is the people who compose humankind. What is not the people is so slight a thing as not to be worth counting. Man is the same in all stations. If that is so, the stations having the most members merit the most respect. To the man who thinks, all the civil distinctions disappear. He sees the same passions, the same sentiments in the hod-carrier and the illustrious man. He discerns there only a difference in language, only a more or less affected tone; and if some essential difference distinguishes them, it is to the disadvantage of those who dissemble more. The people show themselves such as they are, and they are not lovable. But society people have to be disguised. If they were to show themselves such as they are, they would be disgusting.

There is, our wise men also say, the same proportion of happiness and misery in every station—a maxim as deadly as it is untenable. If all are equally happy, what need have I to put myself out for anyone? Let each remain as he is. Let the slave be mistreated. Let the infirm suffer. Let the beggar perish. There is no gain for them in changing stations. These wise men enumerate the miseries of the rich and show the inanity of their vain pleasures. What a crude sophism! The miseries of the rich man come to him not from his station but from himself alone, because he abuses his station. Were he unhappier than the poor man himself, he would not be pitiable, because his ills are all his own doing, and whether he is happy depends only on himself. But the misery of the poor man comes to him from things, from the rigor of his lot, which weighs down on him. No habit can take from him the physical sentiments of fatigue, exhaustion, and hunger. Neither intelli-

gence nor wisdom serves in any way to exempt him from the ills of his station. What does Epictetus gain in foreseeing that his master is going to break his leg? Does the master break Epictetus' leg any the less for that? He has, in addition to his misfortune, the misfortune of foresight.[7] If the people were as clever as we assume them to be stupid, what could they be other than what they are? What could they do other than what they do? Study persons of this order. You will see that although their language is different, they have as much wit and more good sense than you do. Respect your species. Be aware that it is composed essentially of a collection of peoples; that if all the kings and all the philosophers were taken away, their absence would hardly be noticeable; and that things would not be any the worse. In a word, teach your pupil to love all men, even those who despise men. Do things in such a way that he puts himself in no class but finds his bearings in all. Speak before him of humankind with tenderness, even with pity, but never with contempt. Man, do not dishonor man!

It is by these roads and other similar ones—quite contrary to those commonly taken—that it is fitting to penetrate the heart of a young adolescent in order to arouse the first emotions of nature and to develop his heart and extend it to his fellows. To this I add that it is important to mix the least possible personal interest with these emotions—above all, no vanity, no emulation, no glory, none of those sentiments that force us to compare ourselves with others, for these comparisons are never made without some impression of hatred against those who dispute with us for preference, even if only preference in our own esteem. Then one must become blind or get angry, be wicked or stupid. Let us try to avoid being faced with this choice. These dangerous passions will, I am told, be born sooner or later in spite of us. I do not deny it. Everything has its time and its place. I only say that one ought not to assist their birth.

This is the spirit of the method which must be prescribed. Here examples and details are useless because the almost infinite division of characters begins at this point, and each example I might give would perhaps not be suitable for even one in a hundred thousand. It is also at this age that the skillful master begins to take on the true function of the observer and philosopher who knows the art of sounding hearts while working to form them. As long as the young man does not think of dissembling and has not yet learned how to do it, with every object one presents to him one sees in his manner, his eyes, and his gestures the impression it makes on him. One reads in his face all the movements of his soul. By dint of spying them out, one gets to be able to foresee them and finally to direct them.

It is to be noted in general that all men are affected sooner and more generally by wounds, cries, groans, the apparatus of painful operations, and all that brings objects of suffering to the senses. The idea of destruction, since it is more complex, is not similarly striking; the image of death has a later and weaker effect because no one has within himself the experience of death. One must have seen corpses to feel the agonies of the dying. But when this image has once been well formed in our mind, there is no spectacle more horrible to our eyes—

whether because of the idea of total destruction it then gives by means of the senses, or whether because, knowing that this moment is inevitable for all men, one feels oneself more intensely affected by a situation one is sure of not being able to escape.

These diverse impressions have their modifications and their degrees which depend on the particular character of each individual and his previous habits. But they are universal, and no one is completely exempt from them. There exist later and less general impressions which are more appropriate to sensitive souls. These are the ones resulting from moral suffering, from inner pains, affliction, languor, and sadness. There are people who can be moved only by cries and tears. The long, muted groans of a heart gripped by anguish have never wrested sighs from them. Never has the sight of a downcast countenance, of a gaunt gray visage, of a dull eye no longer able to cry, made them cry themselves. The ills of the soul are nothing for them. They are judged; their souls feel nothing. Expect from them only inflexible rigor, hardness, and cruelty. They may be men of integrity and justice, but never clement, generous, and pitying. I say that they may be just—if, that is, a man can be just when he is not merciful.

But do not be in a hurry to judge young people by this rule, especially those who, having been raised as they ought to be, have no idea of moral suffering that they have never been made to experience; for, to repeat, they can pity only ills they know, and this apparent insensibility, which comes only from ignorance, is soon changed into compassion when they begin to feel that there are in human life countless pains they did not know. As for my Emile, if he has had simplicity and good sense in his childhood, I am sure that he will have soul and sensibility in his youth—for truth of sentiments depends in large measure on correctness of ideas.

But why recall it here? More than one reader will doubtless reproach me for forgetting my first resolve and the constant happiness I had promised my pupil. Unhappy men, dying ones, sights of pain and misery! What happiness! What enjoyment for a young heart being born to life! His gloomy teacher, who designed so sweet an education for him, treats him as born only to suffer. This is what will be said. What difference does it make to me? I promised to make him happy, not to appear to be. Is it my fault if you, always dupes of appearance, take it for reality?

Let us take two young men, emerging from their first education and entering into society by two directly opposite paths. One suddenly climbs up to Olympus and moves in the most brilliant world. He is brought to the court, to the nobles, to the rich, to the pretty women. I assume that he is made much of everywhere, and I do not examine the effect of this greeting on his reason—I assume that his reason resists it. Pleasures fly to him; every day new objects entertain him. He abandons himself to everything with an interest which seduces you. You see him attentive, eager, curious. His initial admiration strikes you. You take him to be satisfied; but look at the condition of his soul. You believe he is enjoying himself; I believe he is suffering.

What does he first perceive on opening his eyes? Multitudes of

alleged goods which he did not know, and most of which, since they are only for a moment within his reach, seem to be revealed to him only to make him regret being deprived of them. Does he wander through a palace? You see by his worried curiosity that he is asking himself why his paternal house is not like it. All his questions tell you that he is ceaselessly comparing himself with the master of this house; and that all that he finds mortifying for himself in this parallel makes his vanity rebel and thus sharpens it. If he encounters a young man better dressed than himself, I see him secretly complain about his parents' avarice. Is he more adorned than another? He is pained to see this other outshine him by birth or wit, and to see all his gilding humiliated in the presence of a simple cloth suit. Is he the only one to shine in a gathering? Does he stand on tiptoe to be seen better? Who is not secretly disposed to put down the splendid and vain manner of a young fop? All combine as though by plan: the disturbing glances of a serious man, the scoffing words of a caustic one are not long in reaching him. And were he despised by only a single man, that man's contempt instantly poisons the others' applause.

Let us give him everything. Let us lavish charms and merit on him. Let him be handsome, very clever, and lovable. He will be sought out by women. But in seeking him out before he loves them, they will unhinge him rather than make a lover out of him. He will have successes, but he will have neither transports nor passion for enjoying them. Since his desires, always provided for in advance, never have time to be born, he feels in the bosom of pleasures only the boredom of constraint. The sex made for the happiness of his sex disgusts him and satiates him even before he knows it. If he continues to see women, he does so only out of vanity. And if he were to attach himself to them out of a true taste, he will not be the only young man, the only brilliant one, or the only attractive one and will not always find his beloveds to be prodigies of fidelity.

I say nothing of the worries, the betrayals, the black deeds, the repentings of all kinds inseparable from such a life. It is known that experience of society causes disgust with it. I am speaking only of the troubles connected with the first illusion.

What a contrast for someone who has been restricted to the bosom of his family and his friends, where he has seen himself the sole object of all their attentions, to enter suddenly into an order of things where he counts for so little, to find himself, as it were, drowned in an alien sphere—he who for so long was the center of his own sphere! How many affronts, how many humiliations must he absorb before losing, amidst strangers, the prejudices of his importance which were acquired and nourished amidst his own relatives! As a child everything gave way to him, everything around him was eager to serve him; as a young man he must give way to everyone. Or, for the little he forgets himself and keeps his old ways, how many hard lessons are going to make him come back to himself! The habit of easily getting the objects of his desires leads him to desire much and makes him sense continual privations. Everything that pleases him tempts him; everything others

have, he wants to have. He covets everything; he is envious of everyone. He would want to dominate everywhere. Vanity gnaws at him. The ardor of unbridled desires inflames his young heart; jealousy and hate are born along with them. All the devouring passions take flight at the same time. He brings their agitation into the tumult of society. He brings it back with him every night. He comes home discontented with himself and others. He goes to sleep full of countless vain projects, troubled by countless whims. And even in his dreams his pride paints the chimerical goods, desire for which torments him and which he will never in his life possess. This is your pupil. Let us see mine.

If the first sight that strikes him is an object of sadness, the first return to himself is a sentiment of pleasure. In seeing how many ills he is exempt from, he feels himself to be happier than he had thought he was. He shares the sufferings of his fellows; but this sharing is voluntary and sweet. At the same time he enjoys both the pity he has for their ills and the happiness that exempts him from those ills. He feels himself to be in that condition of strength which extends us beyond ourselves and leads us to take elsewhere activity superfluous to our well-being. To pity another's misfortune one doubtless needs to know it, but one does not need to feel it. When one has suffered or fears suffering, one pities those who suffer; but when one is suffering, one pities only oneself. But if, since all are subject to the miseries of life, we accord to others only that sensibility that we do not currently need for ourselves, it follows that commiseration ought to be a very sweet sentiment, since it speaks well of us. A hard man, on the contrary, is always unhappy, for the condition of his heart leaves him no superabundant sensibility he can accord to the suffering of others.

We judge happiness too much on the basis of appearances; we suppose it to be there where it is least present. We seek it where it could not be. Gaiety is only a very equivocal sign. A gay man is often only an unfortunate one who seeks to mislead others and to forget himself. These people who are so given to laughter, so open, so serene in a group, are almost all gloomy and scolds at home, and their domestics pay the penalty for the entertainment they provide in society. True satisfaction is neither gay nor wild. One is jealous of so sweet a sentiment, and, in tasting it, one thinks about it, savors it, fears it will evaporate. A truly happy man hardly speaks and hardly laughs. He draws, so to speak, the happiness up around his heart. Boisterous games and turbulent joy veil disgust and boredom. But melancholy is the friend of delight. Tenderness and tears accompany the sweetest enjoyments, and excessive joy itself plucks tears rather than laughs.

If at first the multitude and the variety of entertainments appear to contribute to happiness, if the uniformity of a steady life at first appears boring, upon taking a better look one finds, on the contrary, that the sweetest habit of soul consists in a moderation of enjoyment which leaves little opening for desire and disgust. The restlessness of desire produces curiosity and inconstancy. The emptiness of turbulent pleasure produces boredom. One is never bored with his condition when one knows none more agreeable. Of all the men in the world savages are

the least curious and the least bored. They are indifferent to everything. They enjoy not things but themselves. They pass their lives in doing nothing and are never bored.

The man of the world is whole in his mask. Almost never being in himself, he is always alien and ill at ease when forced to go back there. What he is, is nothing; what he appears to be is everything for him.

I cannot prevent myself from imagining on the face of the young man of whom I have previously spoken something impertinent, sugary, affected, which displeases and repels plain people; and on that of my young man an interesting and simple expression that reveals satisfaction and true serenity of soul, inspires esteem and confidence, and seems to await only the offering of friendship to return friendship to those who approach him. It is believed that the face is only a simple development of features already drawn by nature. I, however, think that beyond this development the features of a man's visage are imperceptibly formed and take on a typical cast as a result of the frequent and habitual impression of certain affections of the soul. These affections leave their mark on the visage; nothing is more certain. And when they turn into habits, they must leave durable impressions on it. This is my conception of how the face indicates character, and the latter can sometimes be judged by the former without looking for mysterious explanations which assume knowledge we do not have.[8]

A child has only two marked affections, joy and pain. He laughs or he cries; the intermediates are nothing for him. He ceaselessly passes from one of these movements to the other. This constant alternation prevents them from making any permanent impression on his face and giving it a characteristic expression. But at the age when he has become more sensitive and is more intensely or more constantly affected, more profound impressions leave traces that are more difficult to destroy; and from the habitual condition of the soul there results an arrangement of the features which time renders ineradicable. Nevertheless, it is not rare to see men's faces change at different ages. I have seen several men in whom this has occurred, and I have always found that those I had been able to observe well and to follow had also changed habitual passions. This observation alone, which is well confirmed, would appear to me to be decisive; and it is not misplaced in a treatise on education, in which it is important to learn to judge movements of the soul by external signs.

I do not know whether my young man, because he has not learned to imitate conventional manners and to feign sentiments he does not have, will be less lovable. That is not the object here. I only know that he will be more loving, and I have difficulty believing that someone who loves only himself can disguise himself well enough to be as pleasing as someone who draws from his attachment to others a new sentiment of happiness. But as for this sentiment itself, I believe I have said enough about it to guide a reasonable reader on this question and to show that I have not contradicted myself.

I return, therefore, to my method, and I say: when the critical age approaches, furnish young people with sights which restrain them and not with sights which arouse them. Put their nascent imaginations off

the track with objects which, far from inflaming, repress the activity of their senses. Remove them from big cities where the adornment and the immodesty of women hasten and anticipate nature's lessons, where everything presents to their eyes pleasures they ought to know only when they are able to choose among them. Bring them back to their first abodes where rustic simplicity lets the passions of their age develop less rapidly. Or if their taste for the arts still attaches them to the city, keep them from a dangerous idleness by means of this very taste. Choose with care their society, their occupations, their pleasures. Show them only scenes which are touching but modest, which stir them without seducing them, and which nourish their sensibilities without moving their senses. Be aware also that everywhere there are excesses to fear and that immoderate passions always do more harm than what one wants to avoid by means of them. The object is not to make your pupil a male nurse or a brother of charity, not to afflict his sight with constant objects of pain and suffering, not to march from sick person to sick person, from hospital to hospital, and from the Grève [9] to the prisons. He must be touched and not hardened by the sight of human miseries. Long struck by the same sights, we no longer feel their impressions. Habit accustoms us to everything. What we see too much, we no longer imagine; and it is only imagination which makes us feel the ills of others. It is thus by dint of seeing death and suffering that priests and doctors become pitiless. Therefore, let your pupil know the fate of man and the miseries of his fellows, but do not let him witness them too often. A single object well chosen and shown in a suitable light will provide him emotion and reflection for a month. It is not so much what he sees as his looking back on what he has seen that determines the judgment he makes about it; and the durable impression he receives from an object comes to him less from the object itself than from the point of view which one induces him to take in recalling it. It is by thus husbanding examples, lessons, and images that you will long blunt the needle of the senses and put nature off the track by following its own directions.

To the extent he becomes enlightened, choose ideas which take account of that fact; to the extent his desires catch fire, choose scenes fit to repress them. An old soldier who had distinguished himself as much by his morals as by his courage told me that in his early youth, when his father, a sensible but very pious man, saw his son's nascent temperament delivering him to women, he spared no effort to restrain him. But finally, sensing that his son was about to get away from him in spite of all his efforts, the father took the expedient of bringing him to a hospital for syphilitics and, without giving him any warning, made him enter a room where a troop of these unfortunates expiated by a horrible treatment the dissoluteness which had exposed them to it. At this hideous sight, which revolted all the senses at once, the young man almost got sick. "Go on, miserable profligate," his father then said in a vehement tone, "follow the vile inclination which drags you along. Soon you will be only too happy to be admitted to this room where, a victim of the most infamous pains, you will force your father to thank God for your death."

These few words, joined to the emphatic scene which struck the young man, made an impression on him which was never effaced. Condemned by his station to spend his youth in garrisons, he preferred to absorb all the mockery of his comrades rather than to imitate their libertinism. "I was a man," he said to me, "I had weaknesses. But up to my present age I have never been able to see a public woman without disgust." Master, make few speeches! But learn to choose places, times, and persons. Then give all your lessons in examples, and be sure of their effect.

The way childhood is employed is not very important. The evil which slips in then is not without remedy, and the good done then can come later. But this is not the case with the first age at which man begins truly to live. This age never lasts long enough for the use that ought to be made of it, and its importance demands an unflagging attention. This is why I insist on the art of prolonging it. One of the best precepts of good culture is to slow up everything as much as is possible. Make progress by slow and sure steps. Prevent the adolescent's becoming a man until the moment when nothing remains for him to do to become one. While the body grows, the spirits designed to provide balm for the blood and strength for the fibers are formed and developed. If you cause those spirits, which are intended for the perfection of an individual, to take a different course and be used for the formation of another individual, both remain in a state of weakness, and nature's work stays imperfect. The operations of the mind feel in their turn the effect of this corruption, and the soul, as debilitated as the body, performs its functions only in a weak and languorous fashion. Large and robust limbs make neither courage nor genius; and I can conceive that strength of soul may not accompany that of the body, especially when the organs of communication between the two substances are in poor condition. But, however good the condition of those organs may be, they will always act weakly if they have as their principle only blood that is exhausted, impoverished, and bereft of the substance giving strength and activity to all the springs of the machine. Generally one notices more vigor of soul in men whose young years have been preserved from premature corruption than in those whose dissoluteness began with their power to give themselves over to that corruption. And this is doubtless one of the reasons why peoples with morals ordinarily surpass peoples without morals in good sense and courage. The latter shine solely by certain subtle qualities which they call wit, sagacity, and delicacy. But those great and noble functions of wisdom and reason which distinguish and honor man by fair actions, by virtues, and by truly useful efforts are hardly to be found except among the former.

Masters complain that the fire of this age makes youth unmanageable, and I see that this is so. But is it not their fault? So soon as they have let this fire take its course through the senses, do they not know that one can no longer give it another course? Will a pedant's long, cold sermons efface in his pupil's mind the image of the pleasures he has conceived? Will they banish from his heart the desires which torment him? Will they stifle the ardor of a temperament which he knows

how to put to use? Will he not become enflamed against the obstacles opposed to the only happiness of which he has an idea? And in the harsh law prescribed to him without his being enabled to understand it, what will he see other than the caprice and hatred of a man who seeks to torment him? Is it strange that he rebels and hates that man in turn?

I can well conceive that in making himself pliant a master can make himself more bearable and preserve an apparent authority. But I do not see very well the use of the authority kept over one's pupil only by fomenting the vices it ought to repress. It is as though to calm an impetuous horse the equerry were to make him jump over the edge of a precipice.

This adolescent fire, far from being an obstacle to education, is the means of consummating and completing it. It gives you a hold on a young man's heart when he ceases to be weaker than you. His first affections are the reins with which you direct all his movements. He was free, and now I see him enslaved. So long as he loved nothing, he depended only on himself and his needs. As soon as he loves, he depends on his attachments. Thus are formed the first bonds linking him to his species. In directing his nascent sensibility to his species, do not believe that it will at the outset embrace all men, and that the word *mankind* will signify anything to him. No, this sensibility will in the first place be limited to his fellows, and for him his fellows will not be unknowns; rather, they will be those with whom he has relations, those whom habit has made dear or necessary to him, those whom he observes to have ways of thinking and feeling clearly in common with him, those whom he sees exposed to the pains he has suffered and sensitive to the pleasures he has tasted, those, in a word, whose nature has a more manifest identity with his own and thus make him more disposed to love himself. It will be only after having cultivated his nature in countless ways, after many reflections on his own sentiments and on those he observes in others, that he will be able to get to the point of generalizing his individual notions under the abstract idea of humanity and to join to his particular affections those which can make him identify with his species.

In becoming capable of attachment, he becomes sensitive to that of others * and thereby attentive to the signs of this attachment. Do you see what a new empire you are going to acquire over him? How many chains you have put around his heart before he notices them! What will he feel when, opening his eyes to himself, he sees what you have done for him, when he can compare himself to other young people of his age and you to other governors? I say when he sees, but resist telling him. If you tell him, he will no longer see it. If you exact obedience from him in return for the efforts you have made on his behalf, he will believe that you have trapped him. He will say to himself that, while feigning to oblige him for nothing, you aspired to put him in debt and

* Attachment can exist without being returned, but friendship never can. It is an exchange, a contract like others, but it is the most sacred of all. The word *friend* has no correlative other than itself. Any man who is not his friend's friend is most assuredly a cheat, for it is only in returning or feigning to return friendship that one can obtain it.

to bind him by a contract to which he did not consent. It will be in vain that you add that what you are demanding from him is only for himself. You are demanding in any event, and you are demanding in virtue of what you have done without his consent. When an unfortunate takes the money that one feigned to give him, and finds himself enlisted in spite of himself, you protest against the injustice.[10] Are you not still more unjust in asking your pupil to pay the price for care he did not request?

Ingratitude would be rarer if usurious benefactions were less common. We like what does us good. It is so natural a sentiment! Ingratitude is not in the heart of man, but self-interest is. There are fewer obligated ingrates than self-interested benefactors. If you sell me your gifts, I shall haggle about the price. But if you feign giving in order to sell later at your price, you are practicing fraud. It is their being free that makes these gifts priceless. The heart receives laws only from itself. By wanting to enchain it, one releases it; one enchains it by leaving it free.

When the fisherman puts a lure in the water, the fish comes and stays around it without distrust. But when caught by the hook hidden under the bait, it feels the line being pulled back and tries to flee. Is the fisherman the benefactor, and is the fish ungrateful? Does one ever see that a man forgotten by his benefactor forgets him? On the contrary, he always speaks of him with pleasure; he does not think of him without tenderness. If he finds an occasion to show his benefactor that he recalls his services by some unexpected service of his own, with what inner satisfaction does he then act to demonstrate his gratitude! With what sweet joy he gains the other's gratitude! With what transport does he say to him, "My turn has come!" This is truly the voice of nature. Never did a true benefaction produce an ingrate.

If, therefore, gratitude is a natural sentiment, and you do not destroy its effect by your errors, rest assured that your pupil, as he begins to see the value of your care, will be appreciative of it—provided that you yourself have not put a price on it—and that this will give you an authority in his heart that nothing can destroy. But until you are quite sure you have gained this advantage, take care not to lose it by insisting on what you deserve from him. To vaunt your services is to make them unendurable for him. To forget them is to make him remember them. Until it is time to treat him like a man, let the issue be never what he owes you but what he owes himself. To make him docile, leave him all his freedom; hide yourself so that he may seek you. Lift his soul to the noble sentiment of gratitude by never speaking to him of anything but his interest. I did not want him to be told that what was done was for his good before he was in a condition to understand it. In this speech he would have seen only your dependence, and he would have taken you only for his valet. But now that he begins to feel what it is to love, he also feels what a sweet bond can unite a man to what he loves; and in the zeal which makes you constantly busy yourself with him, he sees a slave's attachment no longer but a friend's affection. Nothing has so much weight in the human heart as the voice of clearly recognized friendship, for we know that it never speaks to us for anything other

than our interest. One can believe that a friend makes a mistake but not that he would want to deceive us. Sometimes one resists his advice, but one never despises it.

Finally we enter the moral order. We have just made a second step into manhood. If this were the place for it, I would try to show how the first voices of conscience arise out of the first movements of the heart, and how the first notions of good and bad are born of the sentiments of love and hate. I would show that *justice* and *goodness* are not merely abstract words—pure moral beings formed by the understanding—but are true affections of the soul enlightened by reason, are hence only an ordered development of our primitive affections; that by reason alone, independent of conscience, no natural law can be established; and that the entire right of nature is only a chimera if it is not founded on a natural need in the human heart.* But I am reminded that my business here is not producing treatises on metaphysics and morals or courses of study of any kind. It is sufficient for me to mark out the order and the progress of our sentiments and our knowledge relative to our constitution. Others will perhaps demonstrate what I only indicate here.

Since my Emile has until now looked only at himself, the first glance he casts on his fellows leads him to compare himself with them. And the first sentiment aroused in him by this comparison is the desire to be in the first position. This is the point where love of self turns into *amour-propre* and where begin to arise all the passions which depend on this one. But to decide whether among these passions the dominant ones in his character will be humane and gentle or cruel and malignant, whether they will be passions of beneficence and commiseration or of envy and covetousness, we must know what position he will feel he has among men, and what kinds of obstacles he may believe he has to overcome to reach the position he wants to occupy.

To guide him in this research, we must now show him men by means of their differences, having already showed him men by means of the accidents common to the species. Now comes the measurement of natural and civil inequality and the picture of the whole social order.

Society must be studied by means of men, and men by means of society. Those who want to treat politics and morals separately will never understand anything of either of the two. We see how men,

* Even the precept of doing unto others as we would have them do unto us has no true foundation other than conscience and sentiment; for where is the precise reason for me, being myself, to act as if I were another, especially when I am morally certain of never finding myself in the same situation? And who will guarantee me that in very faithfully following this maxim I will get others to follow it similarly with me? The wicked man gets advantage from the just man's probity and his own injustice. He is delighted that everyone, with the exception of himself, be just. This agreement, whatever may be said about it, is not very advantageous for good men. But when the strength of an expansive soul makes me identify myself with my fellow, and I feel that I am, so to speak, in him, it is in order not to suffer that I do not want him to suffer. I am interested in him for love of myself, and the reason for the precept is in nature itself, which inspires in me the desire of my well-being in whatever place I feel my existence. From this I conclude that it is not true that the precepts of natural law are founded on reason alone. They have a base more solid and sure. Love of men derived from love of self is the principle of human justice. The summation of all morality is given by the Gospel in its summation of the law.

in attaching themselves at first to the primary relations, ought to be affected by them and what passions ought to arise from them. We see that it is by the progress of the passions in turn that these relations are multiplied and become closer. It is less the strength of arms than the moderation of hearts which makes men independent and free. Whoever desires few things depends on few people. But always confusing our vain desires with our physical needs, those who have made the latter the foundations of human society have always taken the effects for the causes and have only succeeded in going astray in all their reasonings.

In the state of nature there is a de facto equality that is real and indestructible, because it is impossible in that state for the difference between man and man by itself to be great enough to make one dependent on another. In the civil state there is a de jure equality that is chimerical and vain, because the means designed to maintain it themselves serve to destroy it, and because the public power, added to that of the stronger to oppress the weak, breaks the sort of equilibrium nature had placed between them.* From this first contradiction flow all those that are observed in the civil order between appearance and reality. The multitude will always be sacrificed to the few, and the public interest to particular interest. Those specious names, justice and order, will always serve as instruments of violence and as arms of iniquity. From this it follows that the distinguished orders who claim they are useful to the others are actually useful only to themselves at the expense of their subordinates; it is on this basis that one ought to judge the consideration which is due them according to justice and reason. In order to know how each of us ought to judge his own lot, it remains to be seen whether the rank these men have grabbed is more advantageous for the happiness of those who occupy it. This is now the study which is important for us. But to do it well, we must begin by knowing the human heart.[11]

If the object were only to show young people man by means of his mask, there would be no need of showing them this; it is what they would always be seeing in any event. But since the mask is not the man and his varnish must not seduce them, portray men for them such as they are—not in order that young people hate them but that they pity them and not want to resemble them. This is, to my taste, the best-conceived sentiment that man can have about his species.

With this in view, it is important here to take a route opposed to the one we have followed until now and to instruct the young man by others' experience rather than his own. If men deceive him, he will hate them; but if, respected by them, he sees them deceive one another mutually, he will pity them. The spectacle of society, Pythagoras said, resembles that of the Olympic games. Some keep shop there and think only of their profit; others spend their persons and seek glory; others are content to see the games, and these are not the worst.[12]

I would want a young man's society to be chosen so carefully that he

* The universal spirit of the laws of every country is always to favor the strong against the weak and those who have against those who have not. This difficulty is inevitable, and it is without exception.

thinks well of those who live with him; and I would want him to be taught to know the world so well that he thinks ill of all that takes place in it. Let him know that man is naturally good; let him feel it; let him judge his neighbor by himself. But let him see that society depraves and perverts men; let him find in their prejudices the source of all their vices; let him be inclined to esteem each individual but despise the multitude; let him see that all men wear pretty much the same mask, but let him also know that there are faces more beautiful than the mask covering them.

This method, it must be admitted, has its difficulties and is not easy in practice; for if he becomes an observer too soon, if you give him practice at spying on others' actions too closely, you make him a scandalmonger and a satirist, peremptory and quick to judge. He will get an odious pleasure out of seeking for sinister interpretations of everything and of seeing nothing from the good side, even what is good. He will, at the least, get accustomed to the spectacle of vice and to seeing wicked men without disgust, as one gets accustomed to seeing unhappy men without pity. Soon the general perversity will serve him less as a lesson than as an example. He will say to himself that if man is thus, he himself ought not to want to be otherwise.

If you want to instruct him by principles and teach him, along with the nature of the human heart, the external causes which are brought to bear on it and turn our inclinations into vices, you employ a metaphysic he is not in a condition to understand by thus transporting him all of a sudden from sensible objects to intellectual objects. You fall back into the difficulty so carefully avoided up to now of giving him lessons resembling lessons, of substituting in his mind the master's experience and authority for his own experience and the progress of his reason.

To remove both of these obstacles at once and to put the human heart in his reach without risk of spoiling his own, I would want to show him men from afar, to show him them in other times or other places and in such a way that he can see the stage without ever being able to act on it. This is the moment for history. It is by means of history that, without the lessons of philosophy, he will read the hearts of men; it is by means of history that he will see them, a simple spectator, disinterested and without passion, as their judge and not as their accomplice or as their accuser.

To know men, one must see them act. In society one hears them speak. They show their speeches and hide their actions. But in history their actions are unveiled, and one judges them on the basis of the facts. Even their talk helps in evaluating them; for in comparing what they do with what they say, one sees both what they are and what they want to appear to be. The more they disguise themselves, the better one knows them.

Unhappily this study has its dangers, its disadvantages of more than one kind. It is difficult to find a viewpoint from which one can judge his fellows equitably. One of the great vices of history is that it paints men's bad sides much more than their good ones. Because history is interesting only by means of revolutions and catastrophes, so long as a

people grows and prospers calmly with a peaceful government, history says nothing of it. History begins to speak of a people only when, no longer sufficing unto itself, it gets involved in its neighbors' affairs or lets them get involved in its affairs. History makes a people illustrious only when it is already in its decline; all our histories begin where they ought to finish. We have a very precise history of peoples who are destroying themselves; what we lack is the history of peoples who are thriving. They are fortunate enough and prudent enough for history to have nothing to say of them; in fact, we see even in our day that the best-conducted governments are those of which one speaks least. We know, therefore, only the bad; the good is hardly epoch-making. It is only the wicked who are famous; the good are forgotten or made ridiculous. And this is how history, like philosophy, ceaselessly calumniates humankind.

Moreover, the facts described by history are far from being an exact portrayal of the same facts as they happened. They change form in the historian's head; they are molded according to his interests; they take on the complexion of his prejudices. Who knows how to put the reader exactly on the spot of the action to see an event as it took place? Ignorance or partiality disguise everything. Without even altering a historical deed, but by expanding or contracting the circumstances which relate to it, how many different faces one can give to it! Put the same object in different perspectives, it will hardly appear the same; nevertheless nothing will have changed but the eye of the spectator. Is it sufficient for truth's honor to tell me a true fact while making me see it quite otherwise than the way it took place? How many times did a tree more or less, a stone to the right or to the left, a cloud of dust raised by the wind determine the result of a combat without anyone's having noticed it? Does this prevent the historian from telling you the cause of the defeat or the victory with as much assurance as if he had been everywhere? Of what importance to me are the facts in themselves when the reason for them remains unknown to me, and what lessons can I draw from an event of whose true cause I am ignorant? The historian gives me one, but he counterfeits it; and critical history itself, which is making such a sensation, is only an art of conjecture, the art of choosing among several lies the one best resembling the truth.

Have you never read *Cleopatra* or *Cassandra* [13] or other books of this kind? The author chooses a known event; then, accommodating it to his views, adorning it with details of his invention, with personages who never existed and imaginary portraits, he piles fictions on fictions to make reading him more agreeable. I see little difference between these novels and your histories, unless it be that the novelist yields more to his own imagination, while the historian enslaves himself to another's. I shall add to this, if one wishes, that the former sets himself a moral goal, good or bad, which is hardly a concern for the latter.

I will be told that the fidelity of history is of less interest than the truth of morals and characters; provided that the human heart is well depicted, it is of little importance that events be faithfully reported; for, after all, it is added, what difference do facts occurring two thousand years ago make to us? That is right if the portraits are well

rendered according to nature. But if most have their model only in the historian's imagination, is this not to fall back into the difficulty one wanted to flee, and to give to the authority of the writer what one wanted to take away from that of the master? If my pupil is only going to see pictures based on fantasy, I prefer that they be drawn by my hand rather than that of another. They will at least be better suited for him.

The worst historians for a young man are those who make judgments. Facts! Facts! And let him make his own judgments. It is thus that he learns to know men. If the author's judgment guides him constantly, all he does is see with another's eye; and when that eye fails him, he no longer sees anything.

I leave modern history aside, not only because it no longer has a physiognomy and our men all resemble one another; but because our historians, mindful only of being brilliant, dream of nothing but producing highly colored portraits which often represent nothing.* Generally the ancients make fewer portraits and put less wit and more sense in their judgments. Even with them one must be very selective, and not the most judicious but the simplest must be chosen first. I would not want to put either Polybius or Sallust in the hand of a young man. Tacitus is the book of old men; young people are not ready for understanding him. One has to learn to see in human actions the primary features of man's heart before wanting to sound its depths. One has to know how to read facts well before reading maxims. Philosophy in maxims is suitable only to those who have experience. Youth ought to generalize in nothing. Its whole instruction should be in particular rules.

Thucydides is to my taste the true model of historians. He reports the facts without judging them, but he omits none of the circumstances proper to make us judge them ourselves. He puts all he recounts before the reader's eyes. Far from putting himself between the events and his readers, he hides himself. The reader no longer believes he reads; he believes he sees. Unhappily, Thucydides always speaks of war; and one sees in his narratives almost nothing but the least instructive thing in the world—that is, battles. *The Retreat of the Ten Thousand* and Caesar's *Commentaries* have pretty nearly the same wisdom and the same defect. The good Herodotus, without portraits, without maxims, but flowing, naïve, full of the details most capable of interesting and pleasing, would perhaps be the best of historians if these very details did not often degenerate into puerile simplicities more fit to spoil the taste of youth than to form it. One must already have discernment to read him. I say nothing of Livy. His turn will come. But he is political; he is rhetorical; he is everything which is unsuitable for this age.

History in general is defective in that it records only palpable and distinct facts which can be fixed by names, places, and dates, while the slow and progressive causes of these facts, which cannot be similarly assigned, always remain unknown. One often finds in a battle won or lost the reason for a revolution which even before this battle had

* See Davila, Guicciardini, Strada, Solis, Machiavelli, and sometimes de Thou himself. Vertot is almost the only one who knew how to depict without making portraits.

already become inevitable. War hardly does anything other than make manifest outcomes already determined by moral causes which historians rarely know how to see.

The philosophic spirit has turned the reflections of several writers of our age in this direction. But I doubt that the truth gains by their work. The rage for systems having taken possession of them all, each seeks to see things not as they are but as they agree with his system.

Add to all these reflections the fact that history shows actions far more than men, because it grasps the latter only in certain selected moments, in their parade clothes. It exhibits only the public man who has dressed himself to be seen. It does not follow him in his home, in his study, in his family, among his friends. It depicts him only when he plays a role. It depicts his costume far more than his person.

I would prefer to begin the study of the human heart with the reading of lives of individuals; for in them, however much the man may conceal himself, the historian pursues him everywhere. He leaves him no moment of respite, no nook where he can avoid the spectator's piercing eye; and it is when the subject believes he has hidden himself best that the biographer makes him known best. "Those who write lives," says Montaigne, "are more suited to me to the extent that they are interested in intentions more than in results, in what takes place within more than in what happens without. This is why Plutarch is my man." [14]

It is true that the genius of assembled men or of peoples is quite different from a man's character in private, and that one would know the human heart very imperfectly if he did not examine it also in the multitude. But it is no less true that one must begin by studying man in order to judge men, and that he who knew each individual's inclinations perfectly could foresee all their effects when combined in the body of the people.

We must again have recourse to the ancients here—for the reasons I have already mentioned, and also because all the intimate and low, but true and characteristic details are banished from modern style. Men are as adorned by our authors in their private lives as on the stage of the world. Propriety, no less severe in writings than in actions, now permits to be said in public only what it permits to be done in public. And since one can show men only when they are forever playing a part, they are no more known in our books than in our theaters. The lives of kings may very well be written and rewritten a hundred times; we shall have no more Suetoniuses.*

Plutarch excels in these very details into which we no longer dare to enter. He has an inimitable grace at depicting great men in small things; and he is so felicitous in the choice of his stories that often a word, a smile, or a gesture is enough for him to characterize his hero. With a joking phrase Hannibal reassures his terrified army and makes it march laughing to the battle which won Italy for him.[16] Agesilaus

* One of our historians who imitated Tacitus in the grand details was the only one to dare to imitate Suetonius and sometimes to copy Commines in the petty ones; and this very fact, which adds to the value of his book, has caused him to be criticized among us.[15]

astride a stick makes me love the Great King's conqueror.[17] Caesar passing through a poor village and chatting with his friends betrays, unthinkingly, the deceiver who said he wanted only to be Pompey's equal.[18] Alexander swallows medicine and does not say a single word; it is the most beautiful moment of his life.[19] Aristides writes his own name on a shell and thus justifies his surname.[20] Philopoemen, with his cloak off, cuts wood in his host's kitchen.[21] This is the true art of painting. Physiognomy does not reveal itself in large features, nor character in great actions. It is in bagatelles that nature comes to light. The public things are either too uniform or too artificial; and it is almost solely on these that modern dignity permits our authors to dwell.

M. de Turenne was incontestably one of the greatest men of the last century. We have had the courage to make his life interesting by means of little details which make him known and loved. But how many details have we been forced to suppress which would have made him still better known and loved. I shall mention only one which I have from a good source and which Plutarch would have been careful not to omit, but which Ramsay [22] would have been careful not to write had he known it.

One summer day when it was very hot, Viscount de Turenne, wearing a little white jacket and a cap, was at the window in his antechamber. One of his servants happened along and, deceived by his clothing, took him for a kitchen helper with whom this domestic was familiar. He quietly approached from behind and with a hand that was not light gave him a hard slap on the buttocks. The man struck turned around immediately. The valet saw with a shudder his master's face. He fell to his knees in utter despair. "My lord, I believed it was George!" "And if it had been George," shouted Turenne, while rubbing his behind, "there was no need to hit so hard." Is this, then, what you dare not tell? Wretches! Then be forever without naturalness, without vitals. Temper and harden your iron hearts in your vile propriety. Make yourselves contemptible by dint of dignity. But you, good young man, who read this story and who sense with emotion all the sweetness of soul it reveals at the very first reaction, read also about the pettiness of this great man as soon as it was a question of his birth and his name. Think that it is the same Turenne who affected giving way to his nephew everywhere in order that it be clearly seen that this child was the head of a sovereign house.[23] Set these contrasts side by side, love nature, despise opinion, and know man.

Very few people are in a condition to conceive the effects that reading directed in this way can have on a young man's completely fresh mind. We are bent over books from our childhood and accustomed to read without thinking; what we read is all the less striking to us since we already contain within ourselves the passions and the prejudices which fill history and the lives of men, and therefore all men do appears natural to us because we are outside of nature and judge others by ourselves. But picture a young man raised according to my maxims. Think of my Emile. Eighteen years of assiduous care have had as their only object the preservation of a sound judgment and a healthy heart.

Think of him at the raising of the curtain, casting his eyes for the first time on the stage of the world; or, rather, set backstage, seeing the actors take up and put on their costumes, counting the cords and pulleys whose crude magic deceives the spectators' eyes. His initial surprise will soon be succeeded by emotions of shame and disdain for his species. He will be indignant at thus seeing the whole of humankind its own dupe, debasing itself in these children's games. He will be afflicted at seeing his brothers tear one another apart for the sake of dreams and turn into ferocious animals because they do not know how to be satisfied with being men. Certainly, given the pupil's natural dispositions, if the master brings a bit of prudence and selectivity to his readings, if the master gives him a small start on the way to the reflections he ought to draw from them, this exercise will be for him a course in practical philosophy, better, surely, and better understood than all the vain speculations by which young people's minds are scrambled in our schools. When Cyneas, after having heard out the romantic projects of Pyrrhus, asks him what real good the conquest of the world will procure for him which he cannot enjoy right now without so much torment,[24] we see only a fleeting *bon mot*; but Emile will see a very wise reflection which he would have been the first to make and which will never be effaced from his mind, because this reflection finds no contrary prejudice that can prevent it from making an impression. When he then reads the life of this madman and finds that all the latter's great designs ended in his getting killed by a woman's hand, instead of admiring this pretended heroism Emile will see nothing in all the exploits of so great a captain, in all the intrigues of so great a statesman, other than so many steps on the road to that fateful tile which would terminate his life and his projects by a dishonorable death.[25]

All conquerors have not been killed; all usurpers have not failed in their enterprises; several will appear happy to minds biased by vulgar opinions. But he who does not stop at appearances but judges the happiness of men only by the condition of their hearts will see their miseries in their very successes; he will see their desires and their gnawing cares extend and increase with their fortune; he will see them getting out of breath in advancing without ever reaching their goals. He will see them as being similar to those inexperienced travelers who, setting out for the first time in the Alps, think that at each mountain they have crossed them, and when they are at a summit are discouraged to find higher mountains ahead.

Augustus, after having subjected his fellow citizens and destroyed his rivals, ruled for forty years the greatest empire which has ever existed. But did all that immense power prevent him from beating his head against the walls and filling his vast palace with his cries asking Varus for his exterminated legions back? [26] If he had conquered all his enemies, what use would all his vain triumphs have been to him when suffering of every kind was arising constantly around him, when his dearest friends made attempts on his life, and when the shame or the death of all those closest to him reduced him to tears? This un-

fortunate man wanted to govern the world and did not know how to govern his own household! What was the result of this negligence? He saw his nephew, his adopted son, and his son-in-law perish in the prime of life. His grandson was reduced to eating the stuffing of his bed in order to prolong his miserable life for a few hours. His daughter and his granddaughter died after having covered him with their infamy—one of poverty and hunger on a desert island, the other in prison by an executioner's hand. Finally, he himself, the last survivor of his unhappy family, was reduced by his own wife to leaving nothing but a monster as his successor. Such was the fate of this master of the world, so famous for his glory and his happiness.[27] Can I believe that a single one of those who admire that glory and that happiness would be willing to acquire them at the same price?

I have taken ambition as an example. But the play of all the human passions offers similar lessons to whoever wants to study history in order to know himself and to make himself wise at the expense of the dead. The time is approaching when the life of Antony will provide the young man with more relevant instruction than the life of Augustus. Emile will hardly recognize himself in the strange objects which will strike his glance during these new studies. But he will know ahead of time how to dispel the illusion of the passions before they are born; and, seeing that in all times they have blinded men, he will be warned of the way in which they can blind him in turn, if ever he yields to them. These lessons, I know, are ill suited to him; perhaps in case of need they will be too late and insufficient. But remember that they are not the lessons I wanted to draw from this study. In beginning it, I set myself another goal; and certainly, if this goal is not well fulfilled, it will be the master's fault.

Remember that as soon as *amour-propre* has developed, the relative *I* is constantly in play, and the young man never observes others without returning to himself and comparing himself with them. The issue, then, is to know in what rank among his fellows he will put himself after having examined them. I see from the way young people are made to read history that they are transformed, so to speak, into all the persons they see; one endeavors to make them become now Cicero, now Trajan, now Alexander, and to make them discouraged when they return to themselves, to make each of them regret being only himself. This method has certain advantages which I do not discount; but, as for my Emile, if in these parallels he just once prefers to be someone other than himself—were this other Socrates, were it Cato—everything has failed. He who begins to become alien to himself does not take long to forget himself entirely.

It is not philosophers who know men best. They see them only through the prejudices of philosophy, and I know of no station where one has so many. A savage has a healthier judgment of us than a philosopher does. The latter senses his own vices, is indignant at ours, and says to himself, "We are all wicked." The former looks at us without emotion and says, "You are mad." He is right. No one does the bad for the sake of the bad. My pupil is that savage, with the difference

that Emile, having reflected more, compared ideas more, seen our errors from closer up, is more on guard against himself and judges only what he knows.

It is our passions which arouse us against those of others. It is our interest which makes us hate the wicked. If they did us no harm, we would have more pity for them than hate. The harm the wicked do us makes us forget the harm they do themselves. We would pardon them their vices more easily if we knew how much they are punished by their own heart. We feel the offense, and we do not see the chastisement. The advantages are apparent; the pain is interior. He who believes he enjoys the fruit of his vices is no less tormented than if he had not succeeded. The object has changed; the anxiety is the same. They may very well show off their fortunes and hide their hearts, but their conduct shows their hearts in spite of themselves; but in order to see that, one must not have a heart like theirs.

The passions we share seduce us; those that conflict with our interests revolt us; and, by an inconsistency which comes to us from these passions, we blame in others what we would like to imitate. Aversion and illusion are inevitable when we are forced to suffer from another the harm we would do if we were in his place.

What would be required, then, in order to observe men well? A great interest in knowing them and a great impartiality in judging them. A heart sensitive enough to conceive all the human passions and calm enough not to experience them. If there is a favorable moment in life for this study, it is the one I have chosen for Emile. Earlier, men would have been alien to him; later, he would have been like them. Opinion, whose action he sees, has not acquired its empire over him. The passions, whose effect he feels, have not yet agitated his heart. He is a man; he is interested in his brothers; he is equitable; he judges his peers. Surely, if he judges them well, he will not want to be in the place of any of them; for since the goal of all the torments they give themselves is founded on prejudices he does not have, it appears to him to be pie in the sky. For him, all that he desires is within his reach. Sufficient unto himself and free of prejudices, on whom will he be dependent? He has arms, health,* moderation, few needs, and the means of satisfying them. Nurtured in the most absolute liberty, he conceives of no ill greater than servitude. He pities these miserable kings, slaves of all that obey them. He pities these false wise men, chained to their vain reputations. He pities these rich fools, martyrs to their display. He pities these conspicuous voluptuaries, who devote their entire lives to boredom in order to appear to have pleasure. He would pity even the enemy who would do him harm, for he would see his misery in his wickedness. He would say to himself, "In giving himself the need to hurt me, this man has made his fate dependent on mine."

One more step, and we reach the goal. *Amour-propre* is a useful but dangerous instrument. Often it wounds the hand making use of it and

* I believe I can confidently count health and a good constitution among the advantages acquired through his education or, rather, among the gifts of nature his education has preserved for him.

rarely does good without evil. Emile, in considering his rank in the human species and seeing himself so happily placed there, will be tempted to honor his reason for the work of yours and to attribute his happiness to his own merit. He will say to himself, "I am wise, and men are mad." In pitying them, he will despise them; in congratulating himself, he will esteem himself more, and in feeling himself to be happier than them, he will believe himself worthier to be so. This is the error most to be feared, because it is the most difficult to destroy. If he remained in this condition, he would have gained little from all our care; and if one had to choose, I do not know whether I would not prefer the illusion of the prejudices to that of pride.

Great men are not deceived about their superiority; they see it, feel it, and are no less modest because of it. The more they have, the more they know all that they lack. They are less vain about being raised above us than they are humbled by the sentiment of their poverty; and with the exclusive goods which they possess, they are too sensible to be vain about a gift they did not give themselves. The good man can be proud of his virtue because it is his. But of what is the intelligent man proud? What did Racine do not to be Pradon? What did Boileau do in order not to be Cotin?

Here the issue is entirely different. Let us always remain in the common order. I have assumed for my pupil neither a transcendent genius nor a dull understanding. I have chosen him from among the ordinary minds in order to show what education can do for man. All rare cases are outside the rules. Therefore, if as a consequence of my care Emile prefers his way of being, of seeing, and of feeling to that of other men, Emile is right. But if he thus believes himself to be of a more excellent nature and more happily born than other men, Emile is wrong. He is deceived. One must undeceive him or, rather, anticipate the error for fear that afterward it will be too late to destroy it.

The sole folly of which one cannot disabuse a man who is not mad is vanity. For this there is no cure other than experience—if, indeed, anything can cure it. At its birth, at least, one can prevent its growth. Do not get lost in fine reasonings intended to prove to the adolescent that he is a man like others and subject to the same weaknesses. Make him feel it, or he will never know it. This again is a case of an exception to my own rules; it is the case in which my pupil is to be exposed voluntarily to all the accidents that can prove to him that he is no wiser than we are. The adventure with the magician would be repeated in countless ways. I would let flatterers take every advantage of him. If giddy fellows dragged him into some folly, I would let him run the risk. If swindlers went after him at gambling, I would give him over to them so that they could make him their dupe.* I would let him be

* Moreover, our pupil will not often be caught in this trap—he who is surrounded by so many entertainments, who was never bored in his life, and who hardly knows what money is good for. Since the two motives by which one leads children are interest and vanity, these same two motives are used by courtesans and confidence men to get hold of them later. When you see their avidity aroused by prizes and rewards, when you see them at age ten applauded in a public document at school, you see how at twenty they will be made to leave their purses in a gaming house and their health in a house of ill fame. It is always a good bet that the most

flattered, fleeced, and robbed by them. And when, having cleaned him out, they ended by making fun of him, I would further thank them in his presence for lessons they were so good as to give him. The only traps from which I would carefully protect him are those of courtesans. The only consideration I would have for him would be to share all the dangers I let him run and all the affronts I let him receive. I would endure everything silently without complaint, without reproach, without ever saying a single word to him about it. And you can be certain that, if this discretion is well maintained, everything he has seen me suffer for him will make more of an impression on his heart than what he has suffered himself.

Here I cannot prevent myself from mentioning the false dignity of governors who, in order stupidly to play wise men, run down their pupils, affect always to treat them as children, and always distinguish themselves from their pupils in everything they make them do. Far from thus disheartening your pupils' youthful courage, spare nothing to lift up their souls; make them your equals in order that they may become your equals; and if they cannot yet raise themselves up to you, descend to their level without shame, without scruple. Remember that your honor is no longer in you but in your pupil. Share his faults in order to correct them. Take on the burden of his shame in order to efface it. Imitate that brave Roman who, seeing his army flee and not being able to rally it, turned and fled at the head of his soldiers, crying, "They do not flee. They follow their captain."[28] Was he dishonored for that? Far from it. In thus sacrificing his glory, he increased it. The force of duty and the beauty of virtue attract our approbation in spite of ourselves and overturn our insane prejudices. If I received a slap in fulfilling my functions with Emile, far from avenging myself for this slap, I would go everywhere to boast about it, and I doubt whether there is a man in the world vile enough not to respect me the more for it.

It is not that the pupil ought to suppose an understanding as limited as his own in the master and the same facility at letting himself be seduced. This opinion is good for a child who, knowing how to see nothing and compare nothing, takes everyone to be on his level and trusts only those who actually know how to get down to it. But a young man of Emile's age, and as sensible as he is, is not stupid enough to be thus taken in; and it would not be good if he were taken in. The confidence he ought to have in his governor is of another kind. It ought to rest on the authority of reason, on superiority of understanding, on advantages that the young man is in a condition to know and whose utility to himself he senses. A long experience has convinced him that he is loved by his guide, that the guide is a wise and enlightened man who, wishing for his happiness, knows what can procure it for him. He ought to know that in his own interest it is proper to listen to his guide's advice. Now, if the master were to let himself be deceived like the dis-

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learned member of his class will be the biggest gambler and the biggest debauché. It is true that means which were not used in childhood are not subject to the same abuse in youth. But one ought to remember that here my constant maxim is always to take a thing at its worst. I seek first to prevent the vice, and then I assume it in order to remedy it.

ciple, he would lose the right to exact deference and to give his disciple lessons. Still less should the latter suppose that the master purposely lets him be ensnared and sets traps for his simplicity. What then must be done to avoid both of these difficulties at once? That which is best and most natural: be simple and true like him, warn him of the perils to which he is exposed, and show them to him clearly and sensibly, but without exaggeration, ill humor, pedantic display, and, above all, without giving him your advice as an order until it has become one and this imperious tone is absolutely necessary. Is he obstinate after that, as he will very often be? Then say nothing more to him; leave him free; follow him; imitate him, and do it gaily and frankly. Let yourself go, enjoy yourself as much as he does, if it is possible. If the consequences become too great, you are always there to put a stop to them. And meanwhile, will not the young man, witnessing your foresight and your kindness, be at once greatly struck by the one and touched by the other? All his faults are so many bonds he provides you for restraining him in case of need. What here constitutes the master's greatest art is to provide occasions and to manage exhortations in such a way that he knows in advance when the young man will yield and when he will be obstinate. Thus the master can surround him on all sides with the lessons of experience without ever exposing him to too great dangers.

Warn him about his mistakes before he falls into them. When he has fallen into them, do not reproach him for them. You would only inflame his *amour-propre* and make it rebel. A lesson that causes revolt is of no profit. I know of nothing more inept than the phrase: "I told you so!" The best means of making him remember what one has told him is to appear to have forgotten it. Instead of reproaching him when you see him ashamed of not having believed you, gently efface this humiliation with good words. He will surely be more fond of you when he sees that you forget yourself for him, and that, instead of finishing the job of crushing him, you console him. But if you add reproaches to his sorrow, he will conceive a hatred of you and will make it a law unto himself not to listen to you anymore, as though to prove to you that he does not agree with you about the importance of your advice.

The manner of your consolations can provide further instruction for him, instruction so much the more useful in that he will not be on his guard against it. In saying to him, for example, that countless others make the same mistakes, you do not exactly fill the bill for him; you correct him by appearing only to pity him; for, to him who believes he is worth more than other men, it is a most mortifying excuse to be consoled by their example. It is to suggest that the most he can pretend to is that they be not worth more than he is.

The time of mistakes is the time of fables. By censuring the guilty party under an alien mask, one instructs him without offending him; and he understands then, from the truth which he applies to himself, that the apologue is not a lie. The child who has never been deceived by praise understands nothing of the fable I examined earlier. But the giddy young man who has just been the dupe of a flatterer conceives

marvelously that the crow was only a fool. Thus, from a fact he draws a maxim; and by means of the fable the experience he would soon have forgotten is imprinted on his judgment. There is no moral knowledge which cannot be acquired by another's or one's own experience. In the cases where this experience is dangerous, instead of having it oneself, one draws one's lesson from the story. When the test is inconsequential, it is good that the young man remain exposed to it. Then, by means of the apologue, one frames the particular cases known to him in the form of maxims.

I do not mean, however, that these maxims ought to be elaborated or even stated. Nothing is so vain or so ill conceived as the moral with which most fables end—as if this moral were not or should not be understood in the fable itself in such a way as to be palpable to the reader. Why, then, by adding this moral at the end, take from him the pleasure of finding it on his own? Talent at instruction consists in making the disciple enjoy the instruction. But in order for him to enjoy it, his mind must not remain so passive at everything you tell him that he has absolutely nothing to do in order to understand you. The master's *amour-propre* must always leave some hold for the disciple's; he must be able to say to himself, "I conceive, I discern, I act, I learn." One of the things that makes the Pantaloon [29] of Italian comedy a bore is the care he always takes to interpret to the pit platitudes which are only too well understood. I do not want a governor to be Pantaloon; still less do I want him to be an author. One must always make oneself understood, but one must not always say everything. He who says everything says little, for finally he is no longer listened to. What is the meaning of those four verses La Fontaine adds to the fable of the frog who puffs himself up? Is he afraid he will not be understood? [30] Does this great painter need to write names beneath the objects he paints? Far from thereby generalizing his moral, he particularizes it, he restricts it in a way to the examples cited and prevents its being applied to others. Before putting this inimitable author's fables into a young man's hands, I would want to cut out all these conclusions where La Fontaine makes an effort to explain what he has just said no less clearly than agreeably. If your pupil understands the fable only with the help of the explanation, be sure that he will not understand it even in that way.

It would also be important to give these fables an order that is more didactic and more in conformity with the progress of the young adolescent's sentiments and understanding. Can one conceive of anything less reasonable than following exactly the numerical order of the book without regard to need or occasion? First the crow, then the cicada, then the frog, then the two mules, etc. These two mules rankle me, because I remember having seen a child—who was being raised to become a financier, and whom they were making giddy with the function he was going to fulfill—read this fable, learn it, tell it, and retell it hundreds of times without ever drawing from it the least objection to the trade for which he was destined. Not only have I never seen children make any solid application of the fables they learned, but

I have never seen anyone take care to get them to make this application. The pretext of this study is moral instruction, but the true object of the mother and the child is only to get a whole gathering to pay attention to him reciting his fables. So he forgets them all on growing up, when it is a question no longer of reciting them but of profiting from them. To repeat, it is only men who get instruction from fables, and now is the time for Emile to begin.

I show from afar—for I also do not want to say everything—the roads deviating from the right one in order that one may learn to avoid them. I believe that in following the one I have indicated, your pupil will purchase knowledge of men and of himself as cheaply as possible, and that you will put him in a position to contemplate the games of Fortune without envying the fate of its favorites, and to be satisfied with himself without believing himself to be wiser than others. You have also begun to make him an actor in order to make him a spectator; you must finish the job; for from the pit one sees objects as they appear, but from the stage one sees them as they are. To embrace the whole, one must move back to get perspective; one must come near to see the details. But what claim has a young man to admission into the affairs of the world? What right has he to be initiated in these shadowy mysteries? The interests of his age limit him to affairs of pleasure. He still disposes only of himself; it is as though he disposed of nothing. Man is the lowest kind of merchandise; and among our important rights of property that of the person is always the least of all.

When I see that at the age of the greatest activity young people are limited to purely speculative studies, and that then without the least experience they are all of a sudden cast into the world and business, I find that reason no less than nature is offended, and I am no longer surprised that so few people know how to take care of themselves. By what bizarre turn of mind are we taught so many useless things while the art of action is counted for nothing? They claim they form us for society, and they instruct us as if each of us were going to spend his life in thinking alone in his cell or treating airy questions with disinterested men. You believe you are teaching your children how to live by training them in certain contortions of the body and certain formulas of speech signifying nothing. I, too, have taught my Emile how to live, for I have taught him how to live with himself and, in addition, how to earn his bread. But this is not enough. To live in the world, one must know how to deal with men, one must know the instruments which give one a hold over them. One must know how to calculate the action and the reaction of particular interests in civil society and to foresee events so accurately that one is rarely mistaken in one's undertakings, or at least has chosen the best means for succeeding. The laws do not permit young people to manage their own business and dispose of their own goods. But what use to them would be these precautions if up to the prescribed age they could acquire no experience? They would have gained nothing by waiting and would be just as new at things at twenty-five as at fifteen. Doubtless a young man blinded by his ignorance or deceived by his passions must be prevented from doing harm

to himself. But at any age beneficence is permitted; at any age one can, under a wise man's direction, protect the unfortunate who need only support.

Nurses and mothers are attached to children by the care they give them. The exercise of the social virtues brings the love of humanity to the depths of one's heart. It is in doing good that one becomes good; I know of no practice more certain. Busy your pupil with all the good actions within his reach. Let the interest of indigents always be his. Let him assist them not only with his purse but with his care. Let him serve them, protect them, consecrate his person and his time to them. Let him be their representative; he will never again in his life fulfill so noble a function. How many of the oppressed who would never have been heard will obtain justice when he asks for it on their behalf with that intrepid firmness given by the practice of virtue, when he forces the doors of the noble and the rich, when he goes, if necessary, to the foot of the throne to make heard the voice of the unfortunates to whom all access is closed by their poverty and who are prevented by fear of being punished for the ills done to them if they even dare to complain?

But will we make of Emile a knight errant, a redresser of wrongs, a paladin? Will he go and meddle in public affairs, play the wise man and the defender of the laws with the nobles, with the magistrates, with the prince, play the solicitor with the judges and the lawyer with the courts? I know nothing about all that. Terms of denigration and ridicule change nothing in the nature of things. He will do all that he knows to be useful and good. He will do nothing more, and he knows that nothing is useful and good for him which is not suitable to his age. He knows that his first duty is toward himself, that young people ought to distrust themselves, be circumspect in their conduct, respectful before older people, reserved and careful not to talk without purpose, modest in inconsequential things, but hardy in good deeds and courageous in speaking the truth. Such were those illustrious Romans who, before being admitted to public offices, spent their youth in prosecuting crime and defending innocence, without any other interest than that of instructing themselves in serving justice and protecting good morals.

Emile dislikes both turmoil and quarrels, not only among men *

* But if someone picks a quarrel with him, how will he behave? I answer that he will never have a quarrel, that he will never lend himself to it enough to have one. But finally, it will be pursued, who is safe from a slap or from being given the lie by a bully, a drunk, or a brave scoundrel who, in order to have the pleasure of killing his man, begins by dishonoring him? That is something else. Neither the honor nor the life of citizens must be at the mercy of a bully, of a drunk, or of a brave scoundrel, and one can no more secure oneself from such an accident than from the fall of a tile. To meet and put up with a slap or being given the lie has civil effects which no wisdom can anticipate, and for which no tribunal can avenge the injured party. The insufficiency of the laws, therefore, gives him back his independence in this. He is then the only magistrate, the only judge between the offender and himself. He is the only interpreter and minister of the natural law. He owes himself justice and is the only one who can render it, and there is no government on earth so mad as to punish him for having done himself justice in such a case. I do not say that he ought to fight a duel. That is a folly. I say that he owes himself justice, and that he is the only dispenser of it. If I were sovereign, I guarantee that, without so many vain edicts against duels, there would never be either slap or giving of the lie in my states, and that this would be accomplished by a very simple means in which the tribunals would not mix. However that may

but even among animals. Never did he incite two dogs to fight with one another, never did he get a dog to chase a cat. This spirit of peace is an effect of his education which, not having fomented *amour-propre* and a high opinion of himself, has diverted him from seeking his pleasures in domination and in another's unhappiness. He suffers when he sees suffering. It is a natural sentiment. A young man is hardened and takes pleasure at seeing a sensitive being tormented when a reflection of vanity makes him regard himself as exempt from the same pains as a result of his wisdom or his superiority. He who has been protected against this turn of mind could not fall into the vice which is its work. Emile therefore loves peace. The image of happiness delights him, and when he can contribute to producing happiness, this is one more means of sharing it. I have not supposed that when he sees unhappy men, he would have only that sterile and cruel pity for them which is satisfied with pitying ills it can cure. His active beneficence soon gives him understanding which with a harder heart he would not have acquired or would have acquired much later. If he sees discord reigning among his comrades, he seeks to reconcile them; if he sees men afflicted, he informs himself as to the subject of their suffering; if he sees two men who hate each other, he wants to know the cause of their enmity; if he sees an oppressed man groaning under the vexations of the powerful and the rich, he finds out what maneuvers are used to cover over those vexations; and, with the interest he takes in all men who are miserable, the means of ending their ills are never indifferent to him. What, then, do we have to do in order to take advantage of those dispositions in a way suitable to his age? We have to regulate his concern and his knowledge and employ his zeal to increase them.

I do not tire of repeating it: put all the lessons of young people in actions rather than in speeches. Let them learn nothing in books which experience can teach them. What an extravagant project it is to train them in speaking without their having a subject about which to say anything; to believe that on the benches of a college they can be made to feel the energy of the language of the passions and all the force of the art of persuasion without interest in persuading anyone of anything! All the precepts of rhetoric seem to be only pure verbiage to whoever does not sense their use for his profit. Of what import is it to a schoolboy to know how Hannibal went about convincing his soldiers to cross the Alps? If, in place of these magnificent harangues, you told him how he ought to go about getting his principal to give him a vacation, be sure that he would be more attentive to your rules.

If I wanted to teach rhetoric to a young man whose passions all were already developed, I would constantly present him with objects fit to delight those passions, and I would examine with him what language he ought to use with other men in order to engage them to favor his desires. But my Emile is not in so advantageous a situation for the oratorical art. Limited almost solely to what is physically necessary, he

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be, Emile knows the justice he owes to himself in such a case and the example he owes to the security of men of honor. The firmest of men is not in a position to prevent someone from insulting him, but he is in a position to prevent anyone's boasting for long of having insulted him.

has less need of others than others have of him; and having nothing to ask of them for himself, what he wants to persuade them of does not touch him enough to move him excessively. It follows from this that in general he ought to have a language which is simple and hardly at all figurative. Ordinarily he speaks literally and solely to be understood. His speech is little given to sententiousness, because he has not learned to generalize his ideas; he uses few images, because he is rarely passionate.

It is not the case, however, that he is completely phlegmatic and cold. Neither his age nor his morals nor his tastes permit it. In the fire of adolescence the vivifying spirits, retained and distilled in his blood, bring to his young heart a warmth which shines forth in his glance, which is sensed in his speech, which is visible in his actions. His language has gained expression and sometimes vehemence. The noble sentiment inspiring him gives him force and elevation. Suffused with the tender love of humanity, he transmits the emotions of his soul in speaking. His generous frankness has an indefinable something about it that is more enchanting than the artificial eloquence of others; or, rather, he alone is truly eloquent since he has only to show what he feels to communicate it to those who hear him.

The more I think about it, the more I find that in thus putting beneficence in action and drawing from our greater or lesser successes reflections on their causes, there is little useful knowledge which cannot be cultivated in a young man's mind; in this way, along with all the true learning that can be acquired in colleges, he will acquire another science still more important, which is the application of these attainments to the uses of life. Since he takes so much interest in his fellows, it is impossible that he not learn early to weigh and appraise their actions, their tastes, and their pleasures and to evaluate what can contribute to or detract from men's happiness more accurately than can those who are interested in no one and never do anything for others. Those who never deal with anything other than their own affairs are too passionate to judge things soundly. Relating everything to themselves alone and regulating their ideas of good and bad according to their own interest, they fill their minds with countless ridiculous prejudices, and in everything that hampers their slightest advantage, they immediately see the overturning of the whole universe.

Let us extend *amour-propre* to other beings. We shall transform it into a virtue, and there is no man's heart in which this virtue does not have its root. The less the object of our care is immediately involved with us, the less the illusion of particular interest is to be feared. The more one generalizes this interest, the more it becomes equitable, and the love of mankind is nothing other than the love of justice. Do we, then, want Emile to love the truth; do we want him to know it? In his activities let us always keep him at a distance from himself. The more his cares are consecrated to the happiness of others, the more they will be enlightened and wise and the less he will deceived about what is good or bad. But let us never tolerate in him a blind preference founded solely on consideration of persons or on unjust bias. And why would he hurt one to serve another? It is of little importance to him

who gets a greater share of happiness provided that it contributes to the greatest happiness of all. This is the wise man's first interest after his private interest, for each is part of his species and not of another individual.[31]

To prevent pity from degenerating into weakness, it must, therefore, be generalized and extended to the whole of mankind. Then one yields to it only insofar as it accords with justice, because of all the virtues justice is the one that contributes most to the common good of men. For the sake of reason, for the sake of love of ourselves, we must have pity for our species still more than for our neighbor, and pity for the wicked is a very great cruelty to men.

Moreover, it must be remembered that all these means by which I take my pupil out of himself, always have, nevertheless, a direct relation to him; for not only does he get an inner enjoyment from them, but also, in making him beneficent for the profit of others, I work for his own instruction.

I have first given the means, and now I show the effect. What great views I see settling little by little in his head! What sublime sentiments stifle the germ of the petty passions in his heart! What judicial clarity, what accuracy of reason I see forming in him, as a result of the cultivation of his inclinations, of the experience which concentrates the wishes of a great soul within the narrow limit of the possible and makes a man who is superior to others and, unable to raise them to his level, is capable of lowering himself to theirs! The true principles of the just, the true models of the beautiful, all the moral relations of beings, all the ideas of order are imprinted on his understanding. He sees the place of each thing and the cause which removes it from its place; he sees what can do good and what stands in its way. Without having experienced the human passions, he knows their illusions and their effects.

I go forward, attracted by the force of things but without gaining credibility in the judgment of my readers. For a long while they have seen me in the land of chimeras. I always see them in the land of prejudices. In separating myself so far from vulgar opinions I do not cease keeping them present in my mind. I examine them, I meditate on them, neither to follow them nor to flee them but to weigh them in the scale of reasoning. Every time that this reasoning forces me to separate myself from those opinions, I have learned from experience to take it for granted that my readers will not imitate me. I know that they persist in imagining only what they see; and therefore they will take the young man whom I evoke to be an imaginary and fantastic being because he differs from those with whom they compare him. They do not stop to think that he must certainly differ from these young men, since he is raised quite differently, affected by quite contrary sentiments, and instructed quite otherwise from them; indeed, it would be much more surprising if he were to resemble them than to be such as I suppose him. This is not the man of man; it is the man of nature. Assuredly he should be very alien to their eyes.

In beginning this work, I supposed nothing that everyone cannot observe just as I do, because there is a point—the birth of man—from

which we all equally begin. But the more we go forward, I to cultivate nature and you to deprave it, the farther we get from each other. My pupil at the age of six differed little from yours, whom you had not had the time to disfigure. Now they are no longer similar in anything; and the age of maturity, which he is approaching, ought to show that he is of an absolutely different kind, if I have not wasted all my care. The extent of their attainments is perhaps fairly equal on both sides; but the things they have attained bear no resemblance. You are surprised to find in the one sublime sentiments of which the others do not have the slightest germ. But consider also that the latter are already all philosophers and theologians before Emile knows what philosophy is and has even heard of God.

If, then, someone came and said to me, "Nothing of what you suppose exists. Young people are not made that way. They have such or such a passion. They do this or that," it would be as if he were to deny that there was ever a big pear tree because one only sees dwarf pear trees in our gardens.

I beg these judges who are so quick to censure to consider that I know what they are saying here just as well as they do, that I have probably reflected on it longer, and that as I have no interest in foisting anything on them, I have the right to demand that they at least take the time to seek out where I am mistaken. Let them examine carefully the constitution of man and follow the first developments of the heart in various circumstances in order to see how much one individual can differ from another due to the force of education; next let them compare my education with the effects I attribute to it, and then say where I have badly reasoned. I shall have nothing to respond.

What makes me more assertive—and, I believe, more to be excused for being so—is that, instead of yielding to the systematic spirit, I grant as little as possible to reasoning and I trust only observation. I found myself not on what I have imagined but on what I have seen. It is true that I have not restricted my experience to the compass of a city's walls or to a single class of people. But after having compared as many ranks and peoples as I could see in a life spent observing them, I have eliminated as artificial what belonged to one people and not to another, to one station and not to another, and have regarded as incontestably belonging to man only what was common to all, at whatever age, in whatever rank, and in whatever nation.

Now if in accordance with this method you follow a young man from childhood who has not received a particular form and who depends as little as possible on the authority and opinion of others, whom do you think he will most resemble—my pupil or yours? This, it seems to me, is the question which must be resolved in order to know whether I have gone astray.

Man does not easily begin to think. But as soon as he begins, he never stops. Whoever has thought will always think, and once the understanding is practiced at reflection, it can no longer stay at rest. It might, therefore, be believed that I do too much or too little, that the human mind is not naturally so quick to open itself, and that, after hav-

ing given it faculties it does not possess, I keep it inscribed for too long in a circle of ideas it should have gone beyond.

But consider, in the first place, that although I want to form the man of nature, the object is not, for all that, to make him a savage and to relegate him to the depths of the woods. It suffices that, enclosed in a social whirlpool, he not let himself get carried away by either the passions or the opinions of men, that he see with his eyes, that he feel with his heart, that no authority govern him beyond that of his own reason. In this position it is clear that the multitude of objects striking him, the frequent sentiments affecting him, and the various means of providing for his real needs are all going to give him many ideas that he would never have had or that he would have acquired more slowly. The progress natural to the mind is accelerated but not upset. The same man who ought to remain stupid in the forests ought to become reasonable and sensible in the cities when he is a simple spectator there. Nothing is more fit to make a man wise than follies that are seen without being shared; and even he who shares them is still instructed, provided he is not their dupe and does not bring to them the error of men who commit them.

Consider also that since we are limited by our faculties to things which can be sensed, we provide almost no hold for abstract notions of philosophy and purely intellectual ideas. To arrive at them we must either separate ourselves from the body—to which we are so strongly attached—or make a gradual and slow climb from object to object, or, finally, clear the gap rapidly and almost at a leap, by a giant step upward of which childhood is not capable and for which even men need many rungs especially made for them. The first abstract idea is the first of these rungs, but I have great difficulty in seeing how anyone got it into his head to construct it.

The incomprehensible Being who embraces everything, who gives motion to the world and forms the whole system of beings, is neither visible to our eyes nor palpable to our hands; He escapes all our senses. The work is revealed, but the worker is hidden. It is no small undertaking to know even that He exists; and when we have succeeded at that and ask ourselves, "What is He? Where is He?" our mind is confused and goes astray, and we no longer know what to think.

Locke wants one to begin by the study of spirits and later go on to that of bodies. This method is that of superstition, of prejudices, and of error. It is not that of reason nor even of nature in its proper order. It is to stop up our eyes in order to learn to see. One must have studied bodies for a long time in order to form for oneself a true notion of spirits and to suspect that they exist. The opposite order serves only to establish materialism.[32]

Since our senses are the first instruments of our knowledge, corporeal and sensible beings are the only ones of which we immediately have an idea. The word *spirit* has no sense for anyone who has not philosophized. To the people and to children, a spirit is only a body. Do they not imagine spirits who cry out, speak, flutter, and make noise? Now, it will be granted me that spirits which have arms and tongues

bear a strong resemblance to bodies. This is why all the peoples of the world, without excepting the Jews, have made corporeal gods for themselves. We ourselves, with our terms *spirit, trinity, persons,* are for the most part veritable anthropomorphites. I admit that we are taught to say that God is everywhere, but we also believe that air is everywhere, at least in our atmosphere. And in its origin the word *spirit* itself signifies only breath and wind. As soon as people are accustomed to say words without understanding them, it is easy to make them say whatever one wants.

The sentiment of our action on other bodies must at first have made us believe that when they acted on us they did so in a manner similar to the way we acted on them. Thus man began by animating all the beings whose action he felt. Not only did he feel himself less strong than most of these beings, but for want of knowing the limits of their power, he assumed it to be unlimited, and he construed them to be gods as soon as he construed them to be bodies. During the first ages men were frightened of everything and saw nothing dead in nature. The idea of matter was formed no less slowly in them than that of spirit, since the former idea is an abstraction itself. They thus filled the universe with gods which could be sensed. Stars, winds, mountains, rivers, trees, cities, even houses, each had its soul, its god, its life. The teraphim of Laban,[33] the manitous of savages,[34] the fetishes of Negroes, all the works of nature and of men, were the first divinities of mortals. Polytheism was their first religion, and idolatry their first form of worship. They were able to recognize a single god only when, generalizing their ideas more and more, they were in a condition to ascend to a first cause, to bring together the total system of beings under a single idea, and to give a sense to the word *substance,* which is at bottom the greatest of abstractions. Every child who believes in God is, therefore, necessarily an idolator or at least an anthropomorphite. And once the imagination has seen God, it is very rare that the understanding conceives Him. This is precisely the error to which Locke's order leads.

Once the abstract idea of substance has—I know not how—been arrived at, one sees that, in order to admit of only one substance, this substance must be assumed to have incompatible qualities, such as thought and extension, which are mutually exclusive since one is essentially divisible and the other excludes all divisibility. One conceives, moreover, that thought or, if you wish, sentiment is a primary quality inseparable from the substance to which it belongs, and that the same is the case for extension in relation to its substance. From this one concludes that beings that lose one of these qualities lose the substance to which it belongs; that consequently death is only a separation of substances; and that beings in which these two qualities are joined are composed of the two substances to which these two qualities belong.[35]

Now just consider what a distance still remains between the notion of two substances and that of the divine nature, between the incomprehensible idea of the action of our soul on our body and the idea of the action of God on all beings! The ideas of creation, annihilation, ubiquity, eternity, omnipotence, the idea of the divine attributes—all these ideas that are seen to be as confused and obscure as they really

are by so few men, but that are in no way obscure for the people because they do not comprehend them at all—how will these ideas be presented in all their force—that is to say, in all their obscurity—to young minds still busy with the first operations of the senses and able to conceive only what they touch? It is in vain that the abysses of the infinite are open all around us. A child does not know enough to be terrified by them; his weak eyes cannot probe their depths. Everything is infinite for children. They do not know how to set limits to anything—not because they make the measure very long, but because their understanding is short. I have even noticed that they put the infinite less beyond than below the dimensions known to them. They will estimate an immense space far more by their feet than by their eyes. It will extend for them, not farther than they can see, but farther than they can go. If one speaks to them of God's power, they will estimate Him to be almost as strong as their father. Since in everything their knowledge is the measure of the possible, they always judge everything of which they are told to be less than that which they know. Such are the judgments natural to ignorance and weakness of mind. Ajax was afraid to pit himself against Achilles and yet defied Jupiter to combat, because he knew Achilles and did not know Jupiter. A Swiss peasant who believed himself the richest of men, and to whom someone tried to explain what a king is, asked proudly whether the king could really have a hundred cows on the mountain.

I foresee how many readers will be surprised at seeing me trace the whole first age of my pupil without speaking to him of religion. At fifteen he did not know whether he had a soul. And perhaps at eighteen it is not yet time for him to learn it; for if he learns it sooner than he ought, he runs the risk of never knowing it.

If I had to depict sorry stupidity, I would depict a pedant teaching the catechism to children. If I wanted to make a child go mad, I would oblige him to explain what he says in saying his catechism. Someone will object to me that since most of the dogmas of Christianity are mysteries, to wait for the human mind to be capable of having a conception of them is not to wait for the child to be a man but to wait for the man to exist no more. To that I answer, in the first place, that there are mysteries it is impossible for man not only to conceive but to believe, and that I do not see what is gained by teaching them to children, unless it be that they learn how to lie early. I say, moreover, that, to accept the mysteries, one must at least comprehend that they are incomprehensible, and children are not even capable of this conception. At the age when everything is mystery, there are no mysteries strictly speaking.

You must believe in God to be saved. This dogma badly understood is the principle of sanguinary intolerance and the cause of all those vain instructions that strike a fatal blow to human reason in accustoming it to satisfy itself with words. Doubtless there is not a moment to lose in order to merit eternal salvation. But if in order to obtain it, it is enough to repeat certain words, I do not see what prevents us from peopling heaven with starlings and magpies just as well as with children.

The obligation to believe assumes the possibility of doing so. The

philosopher who does not believe is wrong, because he uses badly the reason he has cultivated and because he is in a position to understand the truths he rejects. But what does the child who professes the Christian religion believe? What he has a conception of; and he has a conception of so little of what he is made to say that, if you say to him the opposite, he will adopt it just as gladly. The faith of children and of many men is a question of geography. Are they to be recompensed for being born in Rome rather than in Mecca? One is told that Mohammed is God's prophet, and he says that Mohammed is God's prophet. The other is told that Mohammed is a deceiver, and he says that Mohammed is a deceiver. Each of the two would have affirmed what the other affirms if they had happened to be transposed. Can one proceed from two such similar dispositions to send one to paradise and the other to hell? When a child says that he believes in God, it is not in God that he believes, it is in Peter or James who tell him that there is something called God. And he believes after the fashion of Euripides.

Oh Jupiter! For other than the name
*I know nothing of you.**

We hold that no child who dies before the age of reason will be deprived of eternal happiness. The Catholics believe the same thing of all children who have been baptized, even if they have never heard of God. There are, therefore, cases in which one can be saved without believing in God, and these cases have their place when the human mind is incapable—as in childhood or in madness—of the operations necesry to recognize the divinity. The whole difference I see here between you and me is that you claim that children have this capacity at seven, and I do not even accord it to them at fifteen. Whether I am wrong or right, it is a question here not of an article of faith but of a simple observation of natural history.

By the same principle it is clear that a man who has come to old age without believing in God will not for that be deprived of his presence in the other life if his blindness was not voluntary; and I say that it is not always voluntary. You agree in the case of madmen whom an illness deprives of their spiritual faculties but not of their quality of being men or, consequently, of their right to the benefits of their Creator. Why, therefore, do you not also agree in the case of those who have been sequestered from all society from their childhood and have led an absolutely savage life, deprived of the enlightenment which is acquired only in commerce with men;† for it is a demonstrated impossibility that such a savage could ever raise his reflections up to the knowledge of the true God. Reason tells us that a man can be punished only for the mistakes of his will, and that an invincible ignorance could not be imputed to crime. From this it follows that before the

* Plutarch, *Treatise on Love*, Amyot trans. It is thus that the tragedy *Menalippe* began at first; but the clamor of the people of Athens forced Euripides to change this beginning.[36]

† On the natural state of the human mind and on the slowness of its progress, see the first part of the *Discourse on Inequality*.

bar of eternal justice every man who would believe if he had the necessary enlightenment is reputed to believe, and that the only unbelievers who will be punished are those whose heart closes itself to the truth.

Let us refrain from proclaiming the truth to those who are not in a condition to understand it, for to do this is to want to substitute error for truth. It would be better to have no idea of the divinity than to have ideas of it that are base, fantastic, insulting, or unworthy. It is a lesser evil to be unaware of the divinity than to offend it. "I would rather," says the good Plutarch, "have it believed that there is no Plutarch in the world than have it said that Plutarch is unjust, envious, jealous, and such a tyrant that he demands more than he grants the power to do." [37]

The great evil of the deformed images of the divinity which are drawn in the minds of children is that they remain there all their lives; when the children become men, they no longer conceive of any other God than that of children. In Switzerland I have seen a good and pious mother of a family so convinced of this maxim that she did not want to instruct her son in religion during his first years, for fear that he would be satisfied with this crude instruction and would neglect a better one in the age of reason. This child never heard God spoken of except with devotion and reverence; and when he himself wanted to speak of Him, silence was imposed, as though the subject were too sublime and too great for him. This reserve excited his curiosity, and his *amour-propre* longed for the moment of knowing this mystery which was being hidden from him with such care. The less one spoke to him of God, the less he himself was allowed to speak of Him, the more he was preoccupied by Him. This child saw God everywhere, and what I would be afraid of, if this air of mystery were inopportunely affected, is that one might influence a young man's imagination too much, thereby troubling his brain and finally making a fanatic of him rather than a believer.

But let us fear nothing of the kind for my Emile, who constantly refuses his attention to everything beyond his reach and listens to things he does not understand with the most profound indifference. There are so many things about which he is accustomed to say, "This is not within my competence," that one more hardly embarrasses him. And when he begins to worry about these great questions, it is not because he has heard them propounded; it is when the progress of his enlightenment leads his researches in that direction.

We have seen by what path the cultivated human mind approaches these mysteries, and I will gladly agree that even in the bosom of society it does not naturally reach them except at a more advanced age. But since in this same society there are inevitable causes by which the progress of the passions is accelerated, if one did not similarly accelerate the progress of the enlightenment which serves to regulate these passions, then one would truly depart from the order of nature, and the equilibrium would be broken. When one cannot moderate the too rapid development of one aspect, it is necessary to manage with the same rapidity the development of the others which ought to correspond to it. In this way the order will not be inverted, what ought to go

together will not be separated, and man, whole at every moment of his life, will not have reached one stage of development with respect to one of his faculties while he remains at another stage with respect to the rest.

What a difficulty I see arising here, a difficulty all the greater for being less in things than in the pusillanimity of those who do not dare to resolve it! Let us begin at least by daring to propound it. A child has to be raised in his father's religion. He is always given powerful proofs that this religion, such as it is, is the only true one, that all the others are only folly and absurdity. The strength of the arguments on this point depends absolutely on the country where they are propounded. Let a Turk who finds Christianity so ridiculous at Constantinople go and see how they think of Mohammedanism at Paris! It is especially in matters of religion that opinion triumphs. But we who pretend to shake off the yoke of opinion in everything, we who want to grant nothing to authority, we who want to teach nothing to our Emile which he could not learn by himself in every country, in what religion shall we raise him? To what sect shall we join the man of nature? The answer is quite simple, it seems to me. We shall join him to neither this one nor that one, but we shall put him in a position to choose the one to which the best use of his reason ought to lead him.

Incedo per ignes
Suppositos cineri doloso.[38]

It makes no difference. Zeal and good faith have taken the place of prudence for me up to now. I hope these guarantors will not abandon me in time of need. Readers, do not fear from me precautions unworthy of a friend of the truth. I shall never forget my motto.[39] But it is only too permissible for me to distrust my judgments. Instead of telling you here on my own what I think, I shall tell you what a man more worthy than I thought. I guarantee the truth of the facts which are going to be reported. They really happened to the author of the paper I am going to transcribe. It is up to you to see if useful reflections can be drawn from it about the subject with which it deals. I am not propounding to you the sentiment of another or my own as a rule. I am offering it to you for examination.[40]

"Thirty years ago in an Italian city a young expatriate found himself reduced to utter destitution. He was born a Calvinist, but as a consequence of a giddy escapade he found himself a fugitive without resources in a foreign land, and he changed his religion in order to have bread. There was in this city an almshouse for proselytes. He was admitted to it. In instructing him there about the religious controversy, they gave him doubts he had not had and taught him evils of which he had been ignorant. He heard new dogmas; he saw morals that were still newer to him. He saw them and almost became their victim. He wanted to flee; they locked him up. He complained; he was punished for his complaints. At the mercy of his tyrants, he saw himself treated as a criminal for not wanting to give way to crime. Those who know how much the first taste of violence and injustice arouses a young

heart without experience will be able to picture the condition of his own heart. Tears of rage flowed from his eyes; indignation choked him. He implored heaven and men; he confided in everyone and was listened to by no one. He saw only vile domestics subjected to the infamous person who outraged him, or accomplices of the same crime who jeered at his resistance and urged him to imitate them. He would have been lost were it not for a decent ecclesiastic who came to the almshouse on some business and whom he found the means to consult in secret. The ecclesiastic was poor and needed everyone; but the oppressed lad had even more need of him; and the ecclesiastic did not hesitate to assist the boy's escape, at the risk of making a dangerous enemy for himself.

"Having escaped from vice only to return to indigence, the young man struggled against his destiny without success. For a moment he believed himself above it. At the first glimmer of fortune his ills and his protector were forgotten. He was soon punished for this ingratitude. All his hopes vanished. Vain was the advantage of his youth; his ideas, absorbed from novels, spoiled everything. Having neither enough talent nor enough adroitness to get ahead easily, and knowing neither how to be moderate nor how to be wicked, he aspired to so many things that he was unable to achieve anything. Fallen back into his former distress, without bread, without shelter, ready to die of hunger, he was reminded of his benefactor.

"He returns there, finds him, and is well received by him. The sight of the lad recalls to the ecclesiastic a good deed he had done; the soul always rejoices in such a memory. This man was naturally humane and compassionate. He felt the sufferings of others by his own, and well-being had not hardened his heart. Finally the lessons of wisdom and an enlightened virtue had strengthened his good nature. He greets the young man, seeks lodging for him, and gives him a recommendation. He shares with him his provisions for the necessities, hardly sufficient for two. He does more: he instructs the lad, consoles him, teaches him the difficult art of patiently bearing adversity. Prejudiced people, is it from a priest, is it in Italy, that you would have hoped for all that?

"This decent ecclesiastic was a poor Savoyard vicar whom a youthful adventure had put in disfavor with his bishop, and who had crossed the mountains to seek the resources lacking to him in his own country. He was neither unintelligent nor unlettered and, as he had an interesting face, he had found protectors who procured him a place raising the son of a prince's minister. He preferred poverty to dependence and was ignorant of how to behave with nobles. He did not stay long with this one; but in leaving him, he did not lose his esteem, and since the ecclesiastic lived wisely and made himself loved by everyone, he cherished the illusion that he would return to his bishop's good graces and obtain some little parish in the mountains where he might spend the rest of his days. Such was the furthest goal of his ambition.

"A natural inclination interested him in the young fugitive and made him examine him carefully. He saw that ill fortune had already dried up the young man's heart, that opprobrium and contempt had beaten down his courage, and that his pride, changed into bitter spite, took

men's injustice and hardness only as proof of the viciousness of their nature and the chimerical character of virtue. He had seen that religion served only as the mask of interest and sacred worship only as the safeguard of hypocrisy. He had observed the subtleties of vain disputes where paradise and hell were made the prize of word games. He had seen the sublime original ideas of the divinity disfigured by the fantastic imaginations of men; and finding that in order to believe in God he had to renounce the judgment he had received from Him, he held in the same disdain our ridiculous reveries and the object to which we apply them. Without knowing anything of what is, without imagining anything about the generation of things, he wallowed in his stupid ignorance with a profound contempt for all those who thought they knew more about these things than he did.

"The forgetting of all religion leads to the forgetting of the duties of man. This progress was already more than half accomplished in the libertine's heart. Nevertheless, he was not an ill-born child. But incredulity and poverty, stifling his nature little by little, were leading him rapidly to his destruction and heading him toward the morals of a tramp and the morality of an atheist.

"The evil was almost inevitable but was not absolutely consummated. The young man had some knowledge, and his education had not been neglected. He was at that happy age when the blood is in fermentation and begins to heat up the soul without enslaving it to the furies of the senses. His soul still had all of its vigor. A native shame and a timid character took the place of constraint and prolonged for him this period in which you keep your pupil with so much care. The odious example of brutal depravity and vice without charm, far from animating his imagination, had deadened it. For a long time disgust took the place of virtue for him in preserving his innocence—an innocence that was to succumb only to gentler seductions.

"The ecclesiastic saw the danger and the resources. The difficulties did not dishearten him. He took pleasure in his work. He resolved to complete it and to render to virtue the victim he had snatched from infamy. He made long-range plans for the execution of his project. The beauty of the motive animated his courage and inspired him with means worthy of his zeal. Whatever the success, he was sure of not wasting his time. One always succeeds when one only wishes to do good.

"The first thing he did was to gain the proselyte's confidence by not selling him his benefactions, by not pestering him, by not preaching to him, by always putting himself within his reach, by making himself small in order to be his proselyte's equal. It was, it seems to me, a rather touching spectacle to see a grave man become a rascal's comrade and to see virtue lend itself to the tone of license in order to triumph over it more surely. When the giddy boy came to make his mad confidences and unbosom himself, the priest listened to him and put him at his ease. Without approving evil, the priest was interested in everything. Never did a tactless censure come to stop the boy's chatter and contract his heart. The pleasure which the boy believed the priest took in listening to him increased that which he took in saying everything.

Thus he made his general confession without thinking he was confessing anything.

"After having studied the boy's sentiments and his character well, the priest saw clearly that although he was not ignorant for his age, he had forgotten everything it was important for him to know; and that the opprobrium to which fortune had reduced the boy stifled every true sentiment of good and evil in him. There is a degree of degradation which takes away life from the soul, and the inner voice cannot make itself heard to someone who thinks only of feeding himself. To protect the unfortunate young fellow from this moral death to which he was so near, the priest began by awakening *amour-propre* and self-esteem in him. He showed him a happier future in the good employment of his talents. He reanimated a generous ardor in his heart by the account of others' noble deeds. In making the boy admire those who had performed them, the priest gave him the desire to perform like deeds. To detach him gradually from his idle and vagrant life, he had the boy make extracts from selected books; and, feigning to need these extracts, he fed the noble sentiment of gratitude in him. He instructed him indirectly by these books. He made the boy regain a good enough opinion of himself so as not to believe he was a being useless for anything good and so as not to want any longer to make himself contemptible in his own eyes.

"A bagatelle will provide a basis for judging the art this beneficent man used for gradually lifting his young disciple's heart above baseness without appearing to think of instruction. The ecclesiastic had a probity so well recognized and a discernment so sure that many persons preferred to have their alms distributed by his hand rather than by that of the rich city curés. One day, when he had been given some money to pass out to the poor, the youth, claiming his right as a poor man, was so craven as to ask him for some of it. 'No,' the priest said, 'we are brothers; you are part of me, and I ought not to touch this deposit for my use.' Then he gave the youth from his own money as much as he had asked for. Lessons of this kind are rarely lost on the hearts of young people who are not completely corrupted.

"I am tired of speaking in the third person. And the effort is quite superfluous, for you are well aware, dear fellow citizen, that this unhappy fugitive is myself. I believe myself far enough from the disorders of my youth to dare to admit them, and the hand which drew me away from these disorders merits that, at the expense of a bit of shame, I render at least some honor to his benefactions.

"What struck me the most was seeing in my worthy master's private life virtue without hypocrisy, humanity without weakness, speech that was always straight and simple, and conduct always in conformity with this speech. I did not see him worrying whether those he aided went to vespers, whether they confessed often, whether they fasted on the prescribed days, whether they kept meatless days, or imposing other similar conditions on them—conditions which must be fulfilled if one is to hope for any assistance from the devout, even if one is dying of poverty.

"Encouraged by these observations—far from displaying to him an

affectation of the new convert's zeal—I did not do much to hide from him my ways of thinking and did not see him any the more scandalized by them. Sometimes I could have said to myself, 'He passes over my indifference for the worship I have embraced for the sake of the indifference he also sees in me for the worship in which I was born. He knows that my disdain is no longer a question of party.' But what was I to think when I heard him sometimes approve dogmas contrary to those of the Roman Church and show little esteem for all its ceremonies? I would have believed him a disguised Protestant if I had observed him to be less faithful to these very practices by which he seemed to set little store. But knowing that he acquitted himself of his priestly duties as punctiliously when there were no witnesses as in the public eye, I no longer knew how to judge these contradictions. With the exception of the failing which had formerly brought on his disgrace, and of which he was not too well corrected, his life was exemplary, his morals were irreproachable, his speech was decent and judicious. In living with him in the greatest intimacy I learned to respect him more every day; and as so much goodness had entirely won my heart, I was waiting with agitated curiosity for the moment when I would learn the principle on which he founded the uniformity of so singular a life.

"That moment did not come so soon. Before opening himself to his disciple, he made an effort to ensure the germination of the seeds of reason and goodness he was sowing in his disciple's soul. What was most difficult to destroy in me was a proud misanthropy, a certain bitterness against the rich and happy of the world, as though they were such at my expense and their pretended happiness had been usurped from mine. The mad vanity of youth, which revolts against humiliation, gave me only too much of an inclination to that angry humor, and the *amour-propre* my mentor tried to awaken in me, by leading me to pride, rendered men even more vile in my eyes and succeeded only in adding contempt to my hatred for them.

"Without directly combating this pride, the priest prevented it from turning into hardness of soul; and without taking self-esteem from me, he made it less disdainful of my neighbor. In always setting aside vain appearance and showing me the real evils it covers, he taught me to regret the errors of my fellows, to be touched by their miseries, and to pity them more than to envy them. Moved with compassion for human weaknesses by the profound sentiment of his own, he saw men everywhere the victims of their own and others' vices. He saw the poor groaning under the yoke of the rich and the rich under the yoke of prejudice. 'Believe me,' he said, 'our illusions, far from hiding our ills from us, increase them by giving a value to that which has none and by making us sensitive to countless false privations we would not feel without them. Peace of soul consists in contempt for everything which can trouble it. The man who sets the greatest store by life is he who knows least how to enjoy it. And the one who aspires most avidly to happiness is always most miserable.'

" 'Oh, what sad pictures!' I cried out with bitterness. 'If one must turn away from everything, what was the use for us of being born? And if

one must despise happiness itself, who knows how to be happy?' 'I do,' answered the priest one day in a tone which struck me. 'You happy! So little fortunate, so poor, exiled, persecuted, you are happy! And what have you done to be so?' 'My child,' he went on, 'I shall be glad to tell you.'

"Thereupon he made me understand that after having received my confessions, he wanted to make me his. 'I shall unbosom all the sentiments of my heart to you,' he said, embracing me. 'You shall see me, if not as I am, at least as I see myself. When you have received my whole profession of faith, when you know well the state of my heart, you will know why I esteem myself happy and, if you think as I do, what you have to do to be so. But what I have to avow is not the business of a moment. Time is required to expound to you all I think about man's fate and the true value of life. Let us pick a time and a place suitable for devoting ourselves peacefully to this conversation.'

"I indicated eagerness to hear him. The appointment was put off till no later than the next morning. It was summer. We got up at daybreak. He took me outside of the city on a high hill beneath which ran the Po, whose course was seen along the fertile banks it washes. In the distance the immense chain of the Alps crowned the landscape. The rays of the rising sun already grazed the plains and, projecting on the fields long shadows of the trees, the vineyards, and the houses, enriched with countless irregularities of light the most beautiful scene which can strike the human eye. One would have said that nature displayed all its magnificence to our eyes in order [41] to present them with the text for our conversation. It was there that after having contemplated these objects in silence for some time, the man of peace spoke to me as follows:

Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar

My child, do not expect either learned speeches or profound reasonings from me. I am not a great philosopher, and I care little to be one. But I sometimes have good sense, and I always love the truth. I do not want to argue with you or even attempt to convince you. It is enough for me to reveal to you what I think in the simplicity of my heart. Consult yours during my speech. This is all I ask of you. If I am mistaken, it is in good faith. That is enough for my error not to be imputed to crime. If you were to be similarly mistaken, there would be little evil in that. Reason is common to us, and we have the same interest in listening to it. If I think well, why would you not think as do I?

I was born poor and a peasant, destined by my station to cultivate the earth. But it was thought to be a finer thing for me to learn to earn my bread in the priest's trade, and the means were found to permit me to study. Certainly neither my parents nor I thought very much of seeking what was good, true, and useful, but rather we thought of what had to be known in order to be ordained. I learned what I was supposed

to learn; I said what I was supposed to say. I committed myself as I was supposed to, and I was made a priest. But it was not long before I sensed that in obliging myself not to be a man I had promised more than I could keep.

We are told that conscience is the work of prejudices. Nevertheless I know by my experience that conscience persists in following the order of nature against all the laws of men. We may very well be forbidden this or that, but remorse always reproaches us feebly for what well-ordered nature permits us, and all the more so for what it prescribes to us. Oh, good young man, nature has as yet said nothing to your senses! May you live a long time in the happy state in which its voice is that of innocence. Remember that nature is offended even more when one anticipates it than when one combats it. One must begin by learning how to resist in order to know when one can give in without its being a crime.

From my youth on I have respected marriage as the first and the holiest institution of nature. Having taken away my right to submit myself to it, I resolved not to profane it; for in spite of my classes and studies, I had always led a uniform and simple life, and I had preserved all the clarity of the original understanding in my mind. The maxims of the world had not obscured it, and my poverty removed me from the temptations dictated by the sophisms of vice.

This resolve was precisely what destroyed me. My respect for the bed of others left my faults exposed. The scandal had to be expiated. Arrested, interdicted, driven out, I was far more the victim of my scruples than of my incontinence; and I had occasion to understand, from the reproaches with which my disgrace was accompanied, that often one need only aggravate the fault to escape the punishment.

A few such experiences lead a reflective mind a long way. Seeing the ideas that I had of the just, the decent, and all the duties of man overturned by gloomy observations, I lost each day one of the opinions I had received. Since those opinions that remained were no longer sufficient to constitute together a self-sustaining body, I felt the obviousness of the principles gradually becoming dimmer in my mind. And finally reduced to no longer knowing what to think, I reached the same point where you are, with the difference that my incredulity, the late fruit of a riper age, had been more painfully formed and ought to have been more difficult to destroy.

I was in that frame of mind of uncertainty and doubt that Descartes demands for the quest for truth. This state is hardly made to last. It is disturbing and painful. It is only the self-interest of vice or laziness of soul which leaves us in it. My heart was not sufficiently corrupted to enjoy myself in it, and nothing preserves the habit of reflection better than being more content with oneself than with one's fortune.

I meditated therefore on the sad fate of mortals, floating on this sea of human opinions without rudder or compass and delivered to their stormy passions without any other guide than an inexperienced pilot who is ignorant of his route and knows neither where he is coming from nor where he is going. I said to myself, "I love the truth, I seek it and cannot recognize it. Let it be revealed to me, and I shall remain

attached to it. Why must it hide itself from the eagerness of a heart made to adore it?"

Although I have often experienced greater evils, I have never led a life so constantly disagreeable as during those times of perplexity and anxiety, when I ceaselessly wandered from doubt to doubt and brought back from my long meditations only uncertainty, obscurity, and contradictions about the cause of my being and the principle of my duties.

How can one systematically and in good faith be a skeptic? I cannot understand it. These skeptic philosophers either do not exist or are the unhappiest of men. Doubt about the things it is important for us to know is too violent a state for the human mind, which does not hold out in this state for long. It decides in spite of itself one way or the other and prefers to be deceived rather than to believe nothing.

What doubled my confusion was that I was born in a church which decides everything and permits no doubt; therefore, the rejection of a single point made me reject all the rest, and the impossibility of accepting so many absurd decisions also detached me from those which were not absurd. By being told "Believe everything," I was prevented from believing anything, and I no longer knew where to stop.

I consulted the philosophers. I leafed through their books. I examined their various opinions. I found them all to be proud, assertive, dogmatic (even in their pretended skepticism), ignorant of nothing, proving nothing, mocking one another; and this last point, which was common to all, appeared to me the only one about which they are all right. Triumphant when they attack, they are without force in defending themselves. If you ponder their reasoning, they turn out to be good only at destructive criticism. If you count votes, each is reduced to his own. They agree only to dispute. Listening to them was not the means of getting out of my uncertainty.

I comprehended that the insufficiency of the human mind is the first cause of this prodigious diversity of sentiments and that pride is the second. We do not have the measurements of this immense machine; we cannot calculate its relations; we know neither its first laws nor its final cause. We do not know ourselves; we know neither our nature nor our active principle. We hardly know if man is a simple or a compound being. Impenetrable mysteries surround us on all sides; they are above the region accessible to the senses. We believe we possess intelligence for piercing these mysteries, but all we have is imagination. Through this imaginary world each blazes a trail he believes to be good. None can know whether his leads to the goal. Nevertheless we want to penetrate everything, to know everything. The only thing we do not know is how to be ignorant of what we cannot know. We would rather decide at random and believe what is not than admit that none of us can see what is. We are a small part of a great whole whose limits escape us and whose Author delivers us to our mad disputes; but we are vain enough to want to decide what this whole is in itself and what we are in relation to it.

If the philosophers were in a position to discover the truth, who among them would take an interest in it? Each knows well that his

system is no better founded than the others. But he maintains it because it is his. There is not a single one of them who, if he came to know the true and the false, would not prefer the lie he has found to the truth discovered by another. Where is the philosopher who would not gladly deceive mankind for his own glory? Where is the one who in the secrecy of his heart sets himself any other goal than that of distinguishing himself? Provided that he raises himself above the vulgar, provided that he dims the brilliance of his competitors, what more does he ask? The essential thing is to think differently from others. Among believers he is an atheist; among atheists he would be a believer.

The first fruit I drew from these reflections was to learn to limit my researches to what was immediately related to my interest, to leave myself in a profound ignorance of all the rest, and to worry myself to the point of doubt only about things it was important for me to know.

I understood further that the philosophers, far from delivering me from my useless doubts, would only cause those which tormented me to multiply and would resolve none of them. Therefore, I took another guide, and I said to myself, "Let us consult the inner light; it will lead me astray less than they lead me astray; or at least my error will be my own, and I will deprave myself less in following my own illusions than in yielding to their lies."

Then, going over in my mind the various opinions which had one by one drawn me along since my birth, I saw that although none of them was evident enough to produce conviction immediately, they had various degrees of verisimilitude, and inner assent was given or refused to them in differing measure. On the basis of this first observation, I compared all these different ideas in the silence of the prejudices, and I found that the first and most common was also the simplest and most reasonable, and that the only thing that prevented it from gaining all the votes was that it had not been proposed last. Imagine all your ancient and modern philosophers having first exhausted their bizarre systems of forces, chances, fatality, necessity, atoms, an animate world, living matter, and materialism of every kind; and after them all the illustrious Clarke [42] enlightening the world, proclaiming at last the Being of beings and the Dispenser of things. With what universal admiration, with what unanimous applause would this new system have been received—this new system so great, so consoling, so sublime, so fit to lift up the soul and to give a foundation to virtue, and at the same time so striking, so luminous, so simple, and, it seems to me, presenting fewer incomprehensible things to the human mind than the absurdities it finds in any other system! I said to myself, "Insoluble objections are common to all systems because man's mind is too limited to resolve them. They do not therefore constitute a proof against any one in particular. But what a difference in direct proofs! Must not the only one which explains everything be preferred, if it contains no more difficulties than the others?"

Therefore, taking the love of the truth as my whole philosophy, and as my whole method an easy and simple rule that exempts me from the vain subtlety of arguments, I pick up again on the basis of this rule the examination of the knowledge that interests me. I am resolved

to accept as evident all knowledge to which in the sincerity of my heart I cannot refuse my consent; to accept as true all that which appears to me to have a necessary connection with this first knowledge; and to leave all the rest in uncertainty without rejecting it or accepting it and without tormenting myself to clarify it if it leads to nothing useful for practice.

But who am I? What right have I to judge things, and what determines my judgments? If they are swept along, forced by the impressions I receive, I tire myself out in vain with these researches; they will or will not be made on their own without my mixing in to direct them. Thus my glance must first be turned toward myself in order to know the instrument I wish to use and how far I can trust its use.

I exist, and I have senses by which I am affected. This is the first truth that strikes me and to which I am forced to acquiesce. Do I have a particular sentiment of my existence, or do I sense it only through my sensations? This is my first doubt, which it is for the present impossible for me to resolve; for as I am continually affected by sensations, whether immediately or by memory, how can I know whether the sentiment of the *I* is something outside these same sensations and whether it can be independent of them?

My sensations take place in me, since they make me sense my existence; but their cause is external to me, since they affect me without my having anything to do with it, and I have nothing to do with producing or annihilating them. Therefore, I clearly conceive that my sensation, which is in me, and its cause or its object, which is outside of me, are not the same thing.

Thus, not only do I exist, but there exist other beings—the objects of my sensations; and even if these objects were only ideas, it is still true that these ideas are not me.

Now, all that I sense outside of me and which acts on my senses, I call *matter*; and all the portions of matter which I conceive to be joined together in individual beings, I call *bodies*. Thus all the disputes of idealists and materialists signify nothing to me. Their distinctions concerning the appearance and reality of bodies are chimeras.

Already I am as sure of the universe's existence as of my own. Next, I reflect on the objects of my sensations; and, finding in myself the faculty of comparing them, I sense myself endowed with an active force which I did not before know I had.

To perceive is to sense; to compare is to judge. Judging and sensing are not the same thing. By sensation, objects are presented to me separated, isolated, such as they are in nature. By comparison I move them, I transport them, and, so to speak, I superimpose them on one another in order to pronounce on their difference or their likeness and generally on all their relations. According to me, the distinctive faculty of the active or intelligent being is to be able to give a sense to the word *is*. I seek in vain in the purely sensitive being for this intelligent force which superimposes and which then pronounces; I am not able to see it in its nature. This passive being will sense each object separately, or it will even sense the total object formed by the two; but,

having no force to bend them back on one another, it will never compare them, it will not judge them.

To see two objects at once is not to see their relations or to judge their differences. To perceive several objects as separate from one another is not to number them. I can at the same instant have the idea of a large stick and of a small stick without comparing them and without judging that one is smaller than the other, just as I can see my entire hand at once without making the count of my fingers.* These comparative ideas, *larger* and *smaller,* just like the numerical ideas of *one, two,* etc., certainly do not belong to the sensations, although my mind produces them only on the occasion of my sensations.

We are told that the sensitive being distinguishes the sensations from one another by the differences among these very sensations. This requires explication. When the sensations are different, the sensitive being distinguishes them by their differences. When they are similar, it distinguishes them because it senses them as separate from one another. Otherwise, how in a simultaneous sensation would the sensitive being distinguish two equal objects? It would necessarily have to confound these two objects and take them to be the same, especially in a system in which it is claimed that the sensations representing extension are not extended.

When the two sensations to be compared are perceived, their impression is made, each object is sensed, the two are sensed; but, for all that, their relation is not yet sensed. If the judgment of this relation were only a sensation and came to me solely from the object, my judgments would never deceive me, since it is never false that I sense what I sense.

Why is it, then, that I am deceived about the relation of these two sticks, especially if they are not parallel? Why do I say, for example, that the small stick is a third of the large one, whereas it is only a quarter? Why is the image, which is the sensation, not conformable to its model, which is the object? It is because I am active when I judge, because the operation which compares is faulty, and because my understanding, which judges the relations, mixes its errors in with the truth of the sensations, which reveal only the objects.

Add to that a reflection I am sure will strike you when you have thought about it. It is that if we were purely passive in the use of our senses, there would be no communication among them. It would be impossible for us to know that the body we touch and the object we see are the same. Either we would never sense anything outside of us, or there would be five sensible substances for us whose identity we would have no means of perceiving.

Let this or that name be given to this force of my mind which brings together and compares my sensations; let it be called *attention, meditation, reflection,* or whatever one wishes. It is still true that it is in me and not in things, that it is I alone who produce it, although I produce it only on the occasion of the impression made on me by objects.

* The reports of M. de la Condamine tell us of a people who only know how to count to three. Nevertheless the men who composed this people had hands, and thus had often perceived their fingers without knowing how to count to five.[43]

Without being master of sensing or not sensing, I am the master of giving more or less examination to what I sense.

Therefore, I am not simply a sensitive and passive being but an active and intelligent being; and whatever philosophy may say about it, I shall dare to pretend to the honor of thinking. I know only that truth is in things and not in the mind which judges them, and that the less of myself I put in the judgments I make, the more sure I am of approaching the truth. Thus my rule of yielding to sentiment more than to reason is confirmed by reason itself.

Having, so to speak, made certain of myself, I begin to look outside of myself, and I consider myself with a sort of shudder, cast out and lost in this vast universe, as if drowned in the immensity of beings, without knowing anything about what they are either in themselves or in relation to me. I study them, I observe them, and the first object which presents itself to me for comparison with them is myself.

Everything I perceive with the senses is matter; and I deduce all the essential properties of matter from the sensible qualities that make me perceive it and are inseparable from it. I see it now in motion and now at rest,* from which I infer that neither rest nor motion is essential to it. But motion, since it is an action, is the effect of a cause of which rest is only the absence. Therefore, when nothing acts on matter, it does not move; and by the very fact that it is neutral to rest and to motion, its natural state is to be at rest.

I perceive in bodies two sorts of motion—communicated motion and spontaneous or voluntary motion. In the first the cause of motion is external to the body moved; and in the second it is within it. I do not conclude from this that the movement of a watch, for example, is spontaneous; for if nothing external to the spring acted on it, it would not strain to straighten itself out and would not pull the chain. For the same reason neither would I grant spontaneity to fluids or to fire itself, which causes their fluidity.†

You will ask me if the motions of animals are spontaneous. I shall tell you that I know nothing about it, but analogy supports the affirmative. You will ask me again how I know that there are spontaneous motions. I shall tell you that I know it because I sense it. I want to move my arm, and I move it without this movement's having another immediate cause than my will. It would be vain to try to use reason to destroy this sentiment in me. It is stronger than any evidence. One might just as well try to prove to me that I do not exist.

If there were no spontaneity in the actions of men or in anything which takes place on earth, one would only be more at a loss to imagine the first cause of all motion. As for me, I sense myself to be so persuaded that the natural state of matter is to be at rest and that by

* This rest is, if you wish, only relative. But since we observe degrees of more and less in motion, we have a very clear conception of one of the two extreme terms, which is rest; and we have such a good conception of it that we are even inclined to take as absolute rest, rest that is only relative. Now, it is not true that motion is of the essence of matter if it can be conceived at rest.

† Chemists regard phlogiston, or the element of fire, as scattered, immobile, and stagnant in the mixtures of which it is part until external causes disengage it, gather it together, set it in motion, and change it into fire.

itself it has no force for acting, that when I see a body in motion, I judge immediately either that it is an animate body or that this motion has been communicated to it. My mind rejects all acquiescence to the idea of unorganized matter moving itself or producing some action.

Meanwhile, this visible universe is matter, scattered and dead matter * which as a whole has nothing in it of the union, the organization, or the sentiment common to the parts of an animate body, since it is certain that we do not sense ourselves as parts of a sentient whole. This same universe is in motion; and in its motion, which is regular, uniform, and subjected to constant laws, it contains nothing of that liberty appearing in the spontaneous motions of man and the animals. The world therefore is not a large animal that moves itself. Therefore there is some cause of its motions external to it, one which I do not perceive. But inner persuasion makes this cause so evident to my senses that I cannot see the sun rotate without imagining a force that pushes it; or if the earth turns, I believe I sense a hand that makes it turn.

If I have to accept general laws whose essential relations with matter I do not perceive, how does that help me? These laws, not being real beings or substances, must have some other foundation which is unknown to me. Experience and observation have enabled us to know the laws of motion; these laws determine the effects without showing the causes. They do not suffice to explain the system of the world and the movement of the universe. Descartes formed heaven and earth with dice, but he was not able to give the first push to these dice or to put his centrifugal force in action without the aid of a rotary motion.[44] Newton discovered the law of attraction, but attraction alone would soon reduce the universe to an immobile mass. To this law he had to add a projectile [45] force in order to make the celestial bodies describe curves. Let Descartes tell us what physical law made his vortices turn. Let Newton show us the hand which launched the planets on the tangent of their orbits.

The first causes of motion are not in matter. It receives motion and communicates it, but it does not produce it. The more I observe the action and the reaction of the forces of nature acting on one another, the more I find that one must always go back from effects to effects to some will as first cause; for to suppose an infinite regress of causes is to suppose no cause at all. In a word, every motion not produced by another can come only from a spontaneous, voluntary action. Inanimate bodies act only by motion, and there is no true action without will. This is my first principle. I believe therefore that a will moves the universe and animates nature. This is my first dogma, or my first article of faith.

How does a will produce a physical and corporeal action? I do not know, but I experience within myself that it does so. I want to act, and I act. I want to move my body, and my body moves. But that an inanimate body at rest should succeed in moving itself or in producing

* I have made every effort to conceive of a living molecule without succeeding. The idea of matter sensing without having senses appears unintelligible and contradictory to me. To accept or to reject this idea one would have to begin by understanding it, and I admit that I have not been so fortunate.

motion—that is incomprehensible and without example. The will is known to me by its acts, not by its nature. I know this will as a cause of motion; but to conceive of matter as productive of motion is clearly to conceive of an effect without a cause; it is to conceive of absolutely nothing.

It is no more possible for me to conceive of how my will moves my body than it is to conceive of how my sensations affect my soul. I do not even know why one of these mysteries has appeared more explicable than the other. As for me, whether it is when I am passive or when I am active, the means of uniting the two substances appears absolutely incomprehensible. It is quite strange to begin from this very incomprehensibility in order to confound the two substances, as if operations of such different natures were better explained in a single subject than in two.

It is true that the dogma I have just established is obscure, but still it makes sense and contains nothing repugnant to reason or to observation. Can one say as much of materialism? Is it not clear that if motion were essential to matter, it would be inseparable from it and would always be in it in the same degree? Always the same in each portion of matter, it would be incommunicable, it could not increase or decrease, and one could not even conceive of matter at rest. When someone tells me that motion is not essential but necessary to matter, he is trying to lead me astray with words which would be easier to refute if they contained a bit more sense; for either the motion of matter comes to it from itself and is then essential to it, or if it comes to it from an external cause, it is necessary to matter only insofar as the cause of motion acts on it. We are back with the first difficulty.

General and abstract ideas are the source of men's greatest errors. The jargon of metaphysics has never led us to discover a single truth, and it has filled philosophy with absurdities of which one is ashamed as soon as one has stripped them of their big words. Tell me, my friend, whether someone who talks to you about a blind force spread throughout the whole of nature brings any veritable idea to your mind? People believe that they say something with those vague words *universal force* and *necessary motion,* and they say nothing at all. The idea of motion is nothing other than the idea of transport from one place to another. There is no motion without some direction, for an individual being could not move in all directions at once. In what direction, then, does matter necessarily move? Does all the matter in a body have a uniform motion, or does each atom have its own movement? According to the former idea, the whole universe ought to form a solid and indivisible mass. According to the latter, it ought to form only a scattered and incoherent fluid without it ever being possible for two atoms to join. What direction will this common movement of all matter take? Will it be in a straight line, up, down, right, or left? If each molecule of matter has its particular direction, what will be the causes of all these directions and all these differences? If each atom or molecule of matter only turns around its own center, nothing would ever leave its place, and there would not be any communicated motion. Moreover, this circular motion would have to be determined in some direction. To give matter

abstract motion is to speak words signifying nothing; and to give it a determinate motion is to suppose a cause determining it. The more I multiply particular forces, the more I have new causes to explain without ever finding any common agent directing them. Far from being able to imagine any order in the fortuitous concurrence of elements, I am not even able to imagine their conflict, and the chaos of the universe is more inconceivable to me than is its harmony. I comprehend that the mechanism of the world may not be intelligible to the human mind, but as soon as a man meddles with explaining it, he ought to say things men understand.

If moved matter shows me a will, matter moved according to certain laws shows me an intelligence. This is my second article of faith. To act, to compare, and to choose are operations of an active and thinking being. Therefore this being exists. "Where do you see him existing?" you are going to say to me. Not only in the heavens which turn, not only in the star which gives us light, not only in myself, but in the ewe which grazes, in the bird which flies, in the stone which falls, in the leaf carried by the wind.

I judge that there is an order in the world although I do not know its end; to judge that there is this order it suffices for me to compare the parts in themselves, to study their concurrences and their relations, to note their harmony. I do not know why the universe exists, but that does not prevent me from seeing how it is modified, or from perceiving the intimate correspondence by which the beings that compose it lend each other mutual assistance. I am like a man who saw a watch opened for the first time and, although he did not know the machine's use and had not seen the dial, was not prevented from admiring the work. "I do not know," he would say, "what the whole is good for, but I do see tht each piece is made for the others; I admire the workman in the details of his work; and I am quite sure that all these wheels are moving in harmony only for a common end which it is impossible for me to perceive."

Let us compare the particular ends, the means, the ordered relations of every kind. Then let us listen to our inner sentiment. What healthy mind can turn aside its testimony; to which unprejudiced eyes does the sensible order not proclaim a supreme intelligence; and how many sophisms must be piled up before it is impossible to recognize the harmony of the beings and the admirable concurrences of each piece in the preservation of the others? They can talk to me all they want about combination and chance. Of what use is it to you to reduce me to silence if you cannot lead me to persuasion, and how will you take away from me the involuntary sentiment that always gives you the lie in spite of myself? If organized bodies were combined fortuitously in countless ways before taking on constant forms, if at the outset there were formed stomachs without mouths, feet without heads, hands without arms, imperfect organs of every kind which have perished for want of being able to preserve themselves, why do none of these unformed attempts strike our glance any longer, why did nature finally prescribe laws to itself to which it was not subjected at the outset? I should not, I agree, be surprised that a thing happens, if it is possible

and the difficulty of its occurrence is compensated for by the number of throws of the dice. Nevertheless, if someone were to come to me and say that print thrown around at random had produced the *Aeneid* all in order, I would not deign to take a step to verify the lie. "You forget," I shall be told, "the number of throws." But how many of those throws must I assume in order to make the combination credible? As for me, seeing only a single throw, I can give odds of infinity to one that what it produced is not the result of chance. Consider also that combination and chance will never result in anything but products of the same nature as the elements that are combined; that organization and life will not result from a throw of atoms; and that a chemist combining mixtures will not make them feel and think in his crucible.*

I was surprised, and almost scandalized, at reading Nieuventit.[47] How could that man have wanted to compose a book detailing the wonders of nature that show the wisdom of its Author? His book could be as big as the world without his having exhausted his subject; and as soon as one wishes to enter into the details, the greatest wonder—the harmony and accord of the whole—is overlooked. The generation of living and organized bodies is by itself an abyss for the human mind. The insurmountable barrier that nature set between the various species, so that they would not be confounded, shows its intentions with the utmost clarity. It was not satisfied with establishing order. It took certain measures so that nothing could disturb that order.

There is not a being in the universe that cannot in some respect be regarded as the common center around which all the others are ordered, in such a way that they are all reciprocally ends and means relative to one another. The mind is confused and gets lost in this infinity of relations, not a single one of which is either confused or lost in the crowd. How many absurd suppositions are needed to deduce all this harmony from the blind mechanism of matter moved fortuitously! Those who deny the unity of intention manifested in the relations of all the parts of this great whole can try to cover their nonsense with abstractions, coordinations, general principles, and symbolic terms. Whatever they do, it is impossible for me to conceive of a system of beings so constantly ordered without conceiving of an intelligence which orders it. I do not have it within me to believe that passive and dead matter could have produced living and sensing beings, that a blind fatality could have produced intelligent beings, that what does not think could have produced thinking beings.

I believe therefore that the world is governed by a powerful and wise will. I see it or, rather, I sense it; and that is something important for me to know. But is this same world eternal or created? Is there a single principle of things? Or, are there two or many of them, and what is

* Would anyone believe, if he did not have the proof, that human foolishness could have been brought to this point? Amatus Lusitanus affirmed that he had seen a little man an inch long, closed up in a bottle, whom Julius Camillus, like another Prometheus, had made by the science of alchemy. Paracelsus, *De natura rerum*,[48] teaches the way to produce these little men and maintains that the pygmies, the fauns, the satyrs, and the nymphs were engendered by chemistry. Indeed, I do not see that anything further remains to be done to establish the possibility of these facts, other than to advance that organic matter resists the heat of fire and that its molecules can be preserved alive in a reverberatory furnace.

their nature? I know nothing about all this, and what does it matter to me? As soon as this knowledge has something to do with my interests, I shall make an effort to acquire it. Until then I renounce idle questions which may agitate my *amour-propre* but are useless for my conduct and are beyond my reason.

Always remember that I am not teaching my sentiment; I am revealing it. Whether matter is eternal or created, whether there is or is not a passive principle, it is in any event certain that the whole is one and proclaims a single intelligence; for I see nothing which is not ordered according to the same system and does not contribute to the same end —namely, the preservation of the whole in its established order. This Being which wills and is powerful, this Being active in itself, this Being, whatever it may be, which moves the universe and orders all things, I call *God.* I join to this name the ideas of intelligence, power, and will which I have brought together, and that of goodness which is their necessary consequence. But I do not as a result know better the Being to which I have given them; it is hidden equally from my senses and from my understanding. The more I think about it, the more I am confused. I know very certainly that it exists, and that it exists by itself. I know that my existence is subordinated to its existence, and that all things known to me are in absolutely the same situation. I perceive God everywhere in His works. I sense Him in me; I see Him all around me. But as soon as I want to contemplate Him in Himself, as soon as I want to find out where He is, what He is, what His substance is, He escapes me, and my clouded mind no longer perceives anything.

Suffused with the sense of my inadequacy, I shall never reason about the nature of God without being forced to by the sentiment of His relations with me. These reasonings are always rash; a wise man ought to yield to them only with trembling and with certainty that he is not made to plumb their depths; for what is most insulting to the divinity is not thinking not at all about it but thinking badly about it.

After having discovered those attributes of the divinity by which I know its existence, I return to myself and I try to learn what rank I occupy in the order of things that the divinity governs and I can examine. I find myself by my species incontestably in the first rank; for by my will and by the instruments in my power for executing it, I have more force for acting on all the bodies surrounding me, for yielding to or eluding their actions as I please, than any of them has for acting on me against my will by physical impulsion alone; and by my intelligence I am the only one that has a view of the whole. What being here on earth besides man is able to observe all the others, to measure, calculate, and foresee their movements and their effects, and to join, so to speak, the sentiment of common existence to that of its individual existence? What is there so ridiculous about thinking that everything is made for me, if I am the only one who is able to relate everything to himself?

It is true, then, that man is the king of the earth he inhabits; for not only does he tame all the animals, not only does his industry put the elements at his disposition, but he alone on earth knows how to do so,

and he also appropriates to himself, by means of contemplation, the very stars he cannot approach. Show me another animal on earth who knows how to make use of fire and who knows how to wonder at the sun. What! I can observe and know the beings and their relations, I can sense what order, beauty, and virtue are, I can contemplate the universe and raise myself up to the hand which governs it, I can love the good and do it, and I would compare myself to the brutes? Abject soul, it is your gloomy philosophy which makes you similar to them. Or, rather, you want in vain to debase yourself. Your genius bears witness against your principles, your beneficent heart gives the lie to your doctrine, and the very abuse of your faculties proves their excellence in spite of you.

As for me—I who have no system to maintain, I, a simple and true man who is carried away by the fury of no party and does not aspire to the honor of being chief of a sect, I who am content with the place in which God has put me, I see nothing, except for Him, that is better than my species. And if I had to choose my place in the order of beings, what more could I choose than to be a man?

The effect of this reflection is less to make me proud than to touch me; for this state is not of my choice, and it was not due to the merit of a being who did not yet exist. Can I see myself thus distinguished without congratulating myself on filling this honorable post and without blessing the hand which placed me in it? From my first return to myself there is born in my heart a sentiment of gratitude and benediction for the Author of my species; and from this sentiment my first homage to the beneficent divinity. I adore the supreme power, and I am moved by its benefactions. I do not need to be taught this worship; it is dictated to me by nature itself. Is it not a natural consequence of self-love to honor what protects us and to love what wishes us well?

But when next I seek to know my individual place in my species, and I consider its various ranks and the men who fill them, what happens to me? What a spectacle! Where is the order I had observed? The picture of nature had presented me with only harmony and proportion; that of mankind presents me with only confusion and disorder! Concert reigns among the elements, and men are in chaos! The animals are happy; their king alone is miserable! O wisdom, where are your laws? O providence, is it thus that you rule the world? Beneficent Being, what has become of your power? I see evil on earth.

Would you believe, my good friend, that from these gloomy reflections and these apparent contradictions there were formed in my mind the sublime ideas of the soul which had not until then resulted from my researches? In meditating on the nature of man, I believed I discovered in it two distinct principles; one of which raised him to the study of eternal truths, to the love of justice and moral beauty, and to the regions of the intellectual world whose contemplation is the wise man's delight; while the other took him basely into himself, subjected him to the empire of the senses and to the passions which are their ministers, and by means of these hindered all that the sentiment of the former inspired in him. In sensing myself carried away and caught up in the combat of these two contrary motions, I said to myself, "No,

man is not one. I want and I do not want; I sense myself enslaved and free at the same time. I see the good, I love it, and I do the bad. I am active when I listen to reason, passive when my passions carry me away; and my worst torment, when I succumb, is to sense that I could have resisted."

Young man, listen with confidence; I shall always be of good faith. If conscience is the work of the prejudices, I am doubtless wrong, and there is no demonstrable morality. But if to prefer oneself to everything is an inclination natural to man, and if nevertheless the first sentiment of justice is innate in the human heart, let him who regards man as a simple being overcome these contradictions, and I shall no longer acknowledge more than one substance.

You will note that by this word *substance* I understand in general being that is endowed with some primary quality, abstracting from all particular or secondary modifications. Therefore, if all the primary qualities known to us can be joined in the same being, one ought to admit only one substance; but if some are mutually exclusive, there are as many diverse substances as there are such possible exclusions. You will reflect on that; as for me, whatever Locke says about it,[48] I need only know that matter is extended and divisible in order to be sure that it cannot think. And for all that any philosopher who comes to tell me that trees sense and rocks think * may entangle me in his subtle arguments, I can see in him only a sophist speaking in bad faith who prefers to attribute sentiment to rocks than to grant a soul to man.

Let us suppose a deaf man who denies the existence of sounds because they have never struck his ear. By means of a hidden stringed instrument, I make another stringed instrument that I have placed before his eyes sound in unison with it. The deaf man sees the string vibrate. I say to him, "It is sound which causes that." "Not at all," he answers. "The cause of the string's vibration is in it. It is a quality common to all bodies to vibrate thus." "Then show me," I respond, "this vibration in other bodies or, at least, its cause in this string." "I cannot,"

* It seems to me that far from saying that rocks think, modern philosophy has discovered, on the contrary, that men do not think. It no longer recognizes anything but sensitive beings in nature, and the whole difference it finds between a man and a stone is that man is a sensitive being with sensations while a stone is a sensitive being without them. But if it is true that all matter senses, where shall I conceive the sensitive unity or the individual *I* to be? Will it be in each molecule of matter or in the aggregate bodies? Shall I put this unity equally in fluids and solids, in compounds and elements? There are, it is said, only individuals in nature. But what are these individuals? Is this stone an individual or an aggregate of individuals? Is it a single sensitive being, or does it contain in it as many sensitive beings as it does grains of sand? If each elementary atom is a sensitive being, how shall I conceive that intimate communication by means of which one senses itself in another so that their two *I*'s merge into one? Attraction may be a law of nature whose mystery is unknown to us; but we can at least conceive that attraction, acting according to mass, contains nothing incompatible with extension and divisibility. Can you conceive the same thing of sentiment? The sensible parts are extended, but the sensitive being is indivisible and one. It cannot be divided; it is whole, or it is nothing. The sensitive being is therefore not a body. I do not know how our materialists understand it; but it seems to me that the same difficulties that make them reject thought also ought to make them reject sentiment, and I do not see why, having made the first step, they would not also make the other. What more would it cost them; and since they are sure that they do not think, how do they dare to affirm that they sense?

replies the deaf man, "but because I cannot conceive how this string vibrates, why must I go and explain that by your sounds, of which I do not have the slightest idea? That is to explain an obscure fact by a cause still more obscure. Either make your sounds accessible to my senses, or I say that they do not exist."

The more I reflect on thought and on the nature of the human mind, the more I find that the reasoning of materialists resembles that of this deaf man. They are indeed deaf to the inner voice crying out to them in a tone difficult not to recognize. A machine does not think; there is neither motion nor figure which produces reflection. Something in you seeks to break the bonds constraining it. Space is not your measure; the whole universe is not big enough for you. Your sentiments, your desires, your uneasiness, even your pride have another principle than this narrow body in which you sense yourself enchained.

No material being is active by itself, and I am. One may very well argue with me about this; but I sense it, and this sentiment that speaks to me is stronger than the reason combating it. I have a body on which other bodies act and which acts on them. This reciprocal action is not doubtful. But my will is independent of my senses; I consent or I resist; I succumb or I conquer; and I sense perfectly within myself when I do what I wanted to do or when all I am doing is giving way to my passions. I always have the power to will, I do not always have the force to execute. When I abandon myself to temptations, I act according to the impulsion of external objects. When I reproach myself for this weakness, I listen only to my will. I am enslaved because of my vices and free because of my remorse. The sentiment of my freedom is effaced in me only when I become depraved and finally prevent the voice of the soul from being raised against the law of the body.

I know will only by the sentiment of my own will, and understanding is no better known to me. When I am asked what the cause is which determines my will, I ask in turn what the cause is which determines my judgment; for it is clear that these two causes are only one; and if one clearly understands that man is active in his judgments, and that his understanding is only the power of comparing and judging, one will see that his freedom is only a similar power or one derived from the former. One chooses the good as he has judged the true; if he judges wrong, he chooses badly. What, then, is the cause which determines his will? It is his judgment. And what is the cause which determines his judgment? It is his intelligent faculty, it is his power of judging: the determining cause is in himself. Beyond this I understand nothing more.

Doubtless, I am not free not to want my own good; I am not free to want what is bad for me. But it is in this precisely that my freedom consists—my being able to will only what is suitable to me, or what I deem to be such, without anything external to me determining me. Does it follow that I am not my own master, because I am not the master of being somebody else than me?

The principle of every action is in the will of a free being. One cannot go back beyond that. It is not the word *freedom* which means nothing; it is the word *necessity*. To suppose some act, some effect, which does not derive from an active principle is truly to suppose effects

without cause; it is to fall into a vicious circle. Either there is no first impulse, or every first impulse has no prior cause; and there is no true will without freedom. Man is therefore free in his actions and as such is animated by an immaterial substance. This is my third article of faith. From these three you will easily deduce all the others without my continuing to count them out.

If man is active and free, he acts on his own. All that he does freely does not enter into the ordered system of providence and cannot be imputed to it. Providence does not will the evil a man does in abusing the freedom it gives him; but it does not prevent him from doing it, whether because this evil, coming from a being so weak, is nothing in its eyes, or because it could not prevent it without hindering his freedom and doing a greater evil by degrading his nature. It has made him free in order that by choice he do not evil but good. It has put him in a position to make this choice by using well the faculties with which it has endowed him. But it has limited his strength to such an extent that the abuse of the freedom it reserves for him cannot disturb the general order. The evil that man does falls back on him without changing anything in the system of the world, without preventing the human species from preserving itself in spite of itself. To complain about God's not preventing man from doing evil is to complain about His having given him an excellent nature, about His having put in man's actions the morality which ennobles them, about His having given him the right to virtue. The supreme enjoyment is in satisfaction with oneself; it is in order to deserve this satisfaction that we are placed on earth and endowed with freedom, that we are tempted by the passions and restrained by conscience. What more could divine power itself do for us? Could it make our nature contradictory and give the reward for having done well to him who did not have the power to do evil? What! To prevent man from being wicked, was it necessary to limit him to instinct and make him a beast? No, God of my soul, I shall never reproach You for having made him in Your image, so that I can be free, good, and happy like You!

It is the abuse of our faculties which makes us unhappy and wicked. Our sorrows, our cares, and our sufferings come to us from ourselves. Moral evil is incontestably our own work, and physical evil would be nothing without our vices, which have made us sense it. Is it not for preserving ourselves that nature makes us sense our needs? Is not the pain of the body a sign that the machine is out of order and a warning to look after it? Death . . . Do not the wicked poison their lives and ours? Who would want to live always? Death is the remedy for the evils you do to yourselves; nature did not want you to suffer forever. How few ills there are to which the man living in primitive simplicity is subject! He lives almost without diseases as well as passions and neither foresees nor senses death. When he senses it, his miseries make it desirable to him; from then on it is no longer an evil for him. If we were satisfied to be what we are, we would not have to lament our fate. But to seek an imaginary well-being, we give ourselves countless real ills. Whoever does not know how to endure a bit of suffering ought to expect to suffer much. When someone has ruined his constitution by a

disorderly life, he wants to restore it with remedies. To the evil he senses, he adds the evil he fears. Foresight of death makes it horrible and accelerates it. The more he wants to flee it, the more he senses it, and he dies of terror throughout his whole life, while blaming nature for evils which he has made for himself by offending it.

Man, seek the author of evil no longer. It is yourself. No evil exists other than that which you do or suffer, and both come to you from yourself. General evil can exist only in disorder, and I see in the system of the world an unfailing order. Particular evil exists only in the sentiment of the suffering being, and man did not receive this sentiment from nature: he gave it to himself. Pain has little hold over someone who, having reflected little, possesses neither memory nor foresight. Take away our fatal progress, take away our errors and our vices, take away the work of man, and everything is good.

Where everything is good, nothing is unjust. Justice is inseparable from goodness. Now, goodness is the necessary effect of a power without limit and of the self-love essential to every being aware of itself. The existence of Him who is omnipotent is, so to speak, coextensive with the existence of the beings. To produce and to preserve are the perpetual acts of power. He does not act on what is not. God is not the God of the dead. He could not be destructive and wicked without hurting Himself. He who can do everything can want only what is good.* Therefore, the supremely good Being, because He is supremely powerful, ought also to be supremely just. Otherwise He would contradict Himself; for the love of order which produces order is called *goodness*; and the love of order which preserves order is called *justice*.

God, it is said, owes His creatures nothing. I believe He owes them all He promises them in giving them being. Now, to give them the idea of a good and to make them feel the need of it is to promise it to them. The more I return within myself, and the more I consult myself, the more I see these words written in my soul: *Be just and you will be happy.* That simply is not so, however, considering the present state of things: the wicked man prospers, and the just man remains oppressed. Also, see what indignation is kindled in us when this expectation is frustrated! Conscience is aroused and complains about its Author. It cries out to Him in moaning, "Thou hast deceived me!"

"I have deceived you, rash man! And who told you so? Is your soul annihilated? Have you ceased to exist? O Brutus! O my son! Do not soil your noble life by ending it. Do not leave your hope and your glory with your body on the field of Philippi. Why do you say, 'Virtue is nothing,' when you are going to enjoy the reward for yours? You are going to die, you think. No, you are going to live, and it is then that I shall keep all the promises I have made you."

From the complaints of impatient mortals, one would say that God owes them the recompense before they have deserved it, and that He is obliged to pay their virtue in advance. O, let us be good in the first place, and then we shall be happy. Let us not demand the prize before the

* When the ancients called the supreme God *Optimus Maximus,* they spoke very truly. But in saying *Maximus Optimus,* they would have spoken more exactly, since His goodness comes from His power. He is good because He is great.

victory nor the wage before the work. It is not at the starting block, said Plutarch, that the victors in our sacred games are crowned; it is after they have gone around the track.[49]

If the soul is immaterial, it can survive the body; and if it survives the body, providence is justified. If I had no proof of the immateriality of the soul other than the triumph of the wicked and the oppression of the just in this world, that alone would prevent me from doubting it. So shocking a dissonance in the universal harmony would make me seek to resolve it. I would say to myself, "Everything does not end with life for us; everything returns to order at death." There would in truth be the quandary of wondering where man is when everything which can be sensed about him is destroyed. But this question is no longer a difficulty for me as soon as I have acknowledged two substances. It is very simple to see that, since during my corporeal life I perceive nothing except by my senses, what is not subject to them escapes me. When the union of body and soul is broken, I conceive that the former can be dissolved while the latter can be preserved. Why would the destruction of the one entail the destruction of the other? On the contrary, since they are of such different natures, they were in a violent condition during their union; and when this union ceases, they both return to their natural condition. The active and living substance regains all the strength that it used in moving the passive and dead substance. Alas! I sense it only too much by my vices: man lives only halfway during his life, and the life of the soul begins only with the death of the body.

But what is this life, and is the soul immortal by its nature? My limited understanding conceives nothing without limits. All that is called infinite escapes me. What can I deny and affirm, what argument can I make about that which I cannot conceive? I believe that the soul survives the body long enough for the maintenance of order. Who knows whether that is long enough for it to last forever? However, whereas I can conceive how the body wears out and is destroyed by the division of its parts, I cannot conceive of a similar destruction of the thinking being; and, not imagining how it can die, I presume that it does not die. Since this presumption consoles me and contains nothing unreasonable, why would I be afraid of yielding to it?

I sense my soul. I know it by sentiment and by thought. Without knowing what its essence is, I know that it exists. I cannot reason about ideas I do not have. What I know surely is that the identity of the *I* is prolonged only by memory, and that in order to be actually the same I must remember having been. Now, after my death I could not recall what I was during my life unless I also recalled what I felt, and consequently what I did; and I do not doubt that this memory will one day cause the felicity of the good and the torment of the wicked. Here on earth countless ardent passions absorb the inner sentiment and lead remorse astray. The humiliation and the disgrace attracted by the practice of the virtues prevent all their charms from being felt. But when, after being delivered from the illusions given us by the body and the senses, we will enjoy the contemplation of the Supreme Being and the eternal truths of which He is the source; when the beauty of the order will strike all the powers of our soul; when we are solely occupied with

comparing what we have done with what we ought to have done—then the voice of conscience will regain its strength and its empire. It is then that the pure delight born of satisfaction with oneself and the bitter regret at having debased oneself will distinguish by inexhaustible sentiments the fate that each has prepared for himself. Do not ask me, my good friend, whether there will be other sources of happiness and suffering. I do not know; and those I imagine are enough to console me for this life and to make me hope for another. I do not say that the good will be recompensed, for what good can an excellent being attain other than to exist according to its nature? But I do say that they will be happy, because their Author, the Author of all justice, having created them as sensitive beings did not create them to suffer; and since they did not abuse their freedom on earth, they did not fail to attain their destiny due to their own fault. Nevertheless they suffered in this life; therefore they will be compensated in another. This sentiment is founded less on the merit of man than on the notion of goodness which seems to me inseparable from the divine essence. I am only supposing that the laws of order are observed and that God is constant to Himself.*

Do not ask me whether the torments of the wicked will be eternal. I do not know that either and do not have the vain curiosity to clarify useless questions. What difference does it make to me what will become of the wicked? I take little interest in their fate. However, I have difficulty in believing that they are condemned to endless torments. If supreme justice does take vengeance, it does so beginning in this life. O nations, you and your errors are its ministers. Supreme justice employs the evils that you do to yourselves to punish the crimes which brought on those evils. It is in your insatiable hearts, eaten away by envy, avarice, and ambition, that the avenging passions punish your heinous crimes in the bosom of your false prosperity. What need is there to look for hell in the other life? It begins in this one in the hearts of the wicked.

Where our perishable needs end, where our senseless desires cease, our passions and our crimes ought also to cease. To what perversity would pure spirits be susceptible? Needing nothing, why would they be wicked? If they are deprived of our coarse senses, and all their happiness is in the contemplation of the beings, they would be able to will only the good; and can anyone who ceases to be wicked be miserable forever? This is what I am inclined to believe without making an effort to come to a decision about it. O clement and good Being, whatever Your decrees are, I worship them! If You punish the wicked, I annihilate my weak reason before Your justice. But if the remorse of these unfortunates is to be extinguished in time, if their ills are to end, and if the same place awaits us all equally one day, I praise You for it. Is not the wicked man my brother? How many times have I been tempted to be like him? If, when he is delivered from his misery, he also loses

* Not for us, not for us, Lord,
But for Your name, but for Your own honor,
O God, make us live again! [50]
Psalm 115

the malignity accompanying it, let him be happy as I am. Far from arousing my jealousy, his happiness will only add to mine.

In this way, contemplating God in His works and studying Him by those of His attributes which it matters for me to know, I have succeeded in extending and increasing by degrees the initially imperfect and limited idea I had of this immense Being. But if this idea has become nobler and greater, it is also less proportionate to human reason. As my mind approaches the eternal light, its brilliance dazzles and confuses me, and I am forced to abandon all the terrestrial notions which helped me to imagine it. God is no longer corporeal and sensible. The supreme intelligence which rules the world is no longer the world itself. I lift and fatigue my mind in vain to conceive His essence. When I think that it is what gives life and activity to the living and active substance that rules animate bodies, when I hear it said that my soul is spiritual and that God is a spirit, I am indignant about this debasement of the divine essence. As if God and my soul were of the same nature! As if God were not the only absolute being, the only one that is truly active, sensing, thinking, willing by itself, and from which we get thought, sentiment, activity, will, freedom, and being. We are free only because He wants us to be, and His inexplicable substance is to our souls what our souls are to our bodies. I know nothing about whether He created matter, bodies, minds, and the world. The idea of creation confuses me and is out of my reach. I believe it insofar as I can conceive it. But I do know that He formed the universe and all that exists, that He made everything, ordered everything. God is doubtless eternal; but can my mind embrace the idea of eternity? Why fob myself off with words unrelated to an idea? What I do conceive is that He exists before things, that He will exist as long as they subsist, and that He would exist even after that, if all were to end one day. That a being which I cannot conceive of gives existence to other beings is only obscure and incomprehensible; but that being and nothingness turn themselves into one another on their own is a palpable contradiction, a clear absurdity.

God is intelligent, but in what way? Man is intelligent when he reasons, and the supreme intelligence does not need to reason. For it there are neither premises nor conclusions; there are not even propositions. It is purely intuitive; it sees equally everything which is and everything which can be. For it all truths are only a single idea, as all places are a single point, and all times a single moment. Human power acts by means; divine power acts by itself. God can because He wills. His will causes His power. God is good; nothing is more manifest. But goodness in man is the love of his fellows, and the goodness of God is the love of order; for it is by order that He maintains what exists and links each part with the whole. God is just, I am convinced of it; it is a consequence of His goodness. The injustice of men is their work and not His. Moral disorder, which gives witness against providence in the eyes of the philosophers, only serves to demonstrate it in mine. But man's justice is to give each what belongs to him, and God's justice is to ask from each for an accounting of what He gave him.

If I have just discovered successively these attributes of which I have

no absolute idea, I have done so by compulsory inferences, by the good use of my reason. But I affirm them without understanding them, and at bottom that is to affirm nothing. I may very well tell myself, "God is thus; I sense it, I prove it to myself." I cannot conceive any the better how God can be thus.

Finally, the more effort I make to contemplate His infinite essence, the less I can conceive it. But it is; that is enough for me. The less I can conceive it, the more I worship it. I humble myself and say to Him, "Being of beings, I am because You are; it is to lift myself up to my source to meditate on You ceaselessly. The worthiest use of my reason is for it to annihilate itself before You. It is my rapture of mind, it is the charm of my weakness to feel myself overwhelmed by Your greatness."

After having thus deduced the principal truths that it mattered for me to know from the impression of sensible objects and from the inner sentiment that leads me to judge of causes according to my natural lights, I still must investigate what manner of conduct I ought to draw from these truths and what rules I ought to prescribe for myself in order to fulfill my destiny on earth according to the intention of Him who put me there. In continuing to follow my method, I do not draw these rules from the principles of a high philosophy, but find them written by nature with ineffaceable characters in the depth of my heart. I have only to consult myself about what I want to do. Everything I sense to be good is good; everything I sense to be bad is bad. The best of all casuists is the conscience; and it is only when one haggles with it that one has recourse to the subtleties of reasoning. The first of all cares is the care for oneself. Nevertheless how many times does the inner voice tell us that, in doing our good at another's expense, we do wrong! We believe we are following the impulse of nature, but we are resisting it. In listening to what it says to our senses, we despise what it says to our hearts; the active being obeys, the passive being commands. Conscience is the voice of the soul; the passions are the voice of the body. Is it surprising that these two languages often are contradictory? And then which should be listened to? Too often reason deceives us. We have acquired only too much right to challenge it. But conscience never deceives; it is man's true guide. It is to the soul what instinct is to the body; * he who follows conscience obeys nature and

* Modern philosophy, accepting only what it explains, is careful not to accept that obscure faculty called instinct, which appears without any acquired knowledge to guide animals toward some end. Instinct, according to one of our wisest philosophers,[51] is only a habit without reflection which is, however, acquired by reflecting; and from the way he explains this development, it ought to be concluded that children reflect more than men, a paradox strange enough to deserve the effort of examination. Without going into this discussion here, I ask what name I ought to give to the ardor with which my dog makes war on moles he does not eat, to the patience with which he sometimes watches for them for whole hours, and to the skill with which he grabs them, throws them out on the earth the moment they push up, and then kills them, only to leave them there, without anyone ever having trained him for this hunt and taught him moles were there? I ask further—and this is more important—why, the first time I threatened this same dog, he lay with his back on the ground, his paws bent back in a supplicant attitude, the one most suited to touch me, a posture he would have certainly not kept if, without letting myself be moved, I had beaten him in this position? What! Had my dog, still very

does not fear being led astray. This point is important [continued my benefactor, seeing that I was going to interrupt him]. Allow me to tarry a bit to clarify it.

All the morality of our actions is in the judgment we ourselves make of them. If it is true that the good is good, it must be so in the depths of our hearts as it is in our works, and the primary reward for justice is to sense that one practices it. If moral goodness is in conformity with our nature, man could be healthy of spirit or well constituted only to the extent that he is good. If it is not and man is naturally wicked, he cannot cease to be so without being corrupted, and goodness in him is only a vice contrary to nature. If he were made to do harm to his kind, as a wolf is made to slaughter his prey, a humane man would be an animal as depraved as a pitying wolf, and only virtue would leave us with remorse.

Let us return to ourselves, my young friend! Let us examine, all personal interest aside, where our inclinations lead us. Which spectacle gratifies us more—that of others' torments or that of their happiness? Which is sweeter to do and leaves us with a more agreeable impression after having done it—a beneficent act or a wicked act? In whom do you take an interest in your theaters? Is it in heinous crimes that you take pleasure? Is it to their authors when they are punished that you give your tears? It is said that we are indifferent to everything outside of our interest; but, all to the contrary, the sweetness of friendship and of humanity consoles us in our suffering; even in our pleasures we would be too alone, too miserable, if we had no one with whom to share them. If there is nothing moral in the heart of man, what is the source of these transports of admiration for heroic actions, these raptures of love for great souls? What relation does this enthusiasm for virtue have to our private interest? Why would I want to be Cato, who disembowels himself, rather than Caesar triumphant? Take this love of the beautiful from our hearts, and you take all the charm from life. He whose vile passions have stifled these delicious sentiments in his narrow soul, and who, by dint of self-centeredness, succeeds in loving only himself, has no more transports. His icy heart no longer palpitates with joy; a sweet tenderness never moistens his eyes; he has no more joy in anything. This unfortunate man no longer feels, no longer lives. He is already dead.

But however numerous the wicked are on the earth, there are few of these cadaverous souls who have become insensitive, except where their own interest is at stake, to everything which is just and good. Iniquity pleases only to the extent one profits from it; in all the rest one wants the innocent to be protected. One sees some act of violence

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little and practically just born, already acquired moral ideas? Did he know what clemency and generosity are? On the basis of what acquired understanding did he hope to mollify me by thus abandoning himself to my discretion? Every dog in the world does pretty nearly the same thing in the same situation, and I am saying nothing here that cannot be verified by everyone. Let the philosophers who so disdainfully reject instinct be so good as to explain this fact by the mere action of the sensations and the knowledge they cause us to acquire. Let them explain it in a way satisfying to every man of good sense. Then I shall have nothing more to say, and I shall no longer speak of instinct.

and injustice in the street or on the road. Instantly an emotion of anger and indignation is aroused in the depths of the heart, and it leads us to take up the defense of the oppressed; but a more powerful duty restrains us, and the laws take from us the right of protecting innocence. On the other hand, if some act of clemency or generosity strikes our eyes, what admiration, what love it inspires in us! Who does not say to himself, "I would like to have done the same"? It is surely of very little importance to us that a man was wicked or just two thousand years ago; nevertheless, we take an interest in ancient history just as if it all had taken place in our day. What do Catiline's crimes do to me? Am I afraid of being his victim? Why, then, am I as horrified by him as if he were my contemporary? We do not hate the wicked only because they do us harm, but because they are wicked. Not only do we want to be happy; we also wish for the happiness of others. And when this happiness does not come at the expense of our own, it increases it. Finally, in spite of oneself, one pities the unfortunate; when we are witness to their ills, we suffer from them. The most perverse are unable to lose this inclination entirely. Often it puts them in contradiction with themselves. The robber who plunders passers-by still covers the nakedness of the poor, and the most ferocious killer supports a fainting man.

We speak of the cry of remorse which in secret punishes hidden crimes and so often brings them to light. Alas, who of us has never heard this importunate voice? We speak from experience, and we would like to stifle this tyrannical sentiment that gives us so much torment. Let us obey nature. We shall know with what gentleness it reigns, and what charm one finds, after having hearkened to it, in giving favorable testimony on our own behalf. The wicked man fears and flees himself. He cheers himself up by rushing outside of himself. His restless eyes rove around him and seek an object that is entertaining to him. Without bitter satire, without insulting banter, he would always be sad. The mocking laugh is his only pleasure. By contrast, the serenity of the just man is internal. His is not a malignant laugh but a joyous one; he bears its source in himself. He is as gay alone as in the midst of a circle. He does not draw his contentment from those who come near him; he communicates it to them.

Cast your eyes on all the nations of the world, go through all the histories. Among so many inhuman and bizarre cults, among this prodigious diversity of morals and characters, you will find everywhere the same ideas of justice and decency, everywhere the same notions of good and bad. Ancient paganism gave birth to abominable gods who would have been punished on earth as villains and who presented a picture of supreme happiness consisting only of heinous crimes to commit and passions to satisfy. But vice, armed with a sacred authority, descended in vain from the eternal abode; moral instinct repulsed it from the heart of human beings. While celebrating Jupiter's debauches, they admired Xenocrates' continence. The chaste Lucretia worshiped the lewd Venus. The intrepid Roman sacrificed to fear. He invoked the god who mutilated his father, and he himself died without a murmur at his own father's hand. The most contemptible divinities were served by the greatest men. The holy voice of nature, stronger than that of the

gods, made itself respected on earth and seemed to relegate crime, along with the guilty, to heaven.

There is in the depths of souls, then, an innate principle of justice and virtue according to which, in spite of our own maxims, we judge our actions and those of others as good or bad. It is to this principle that I give the name *conscience*.

But at this word I hear the clamor of those who are allegedly wise rising on all sides: errors of childhood, prejudices of education, they all cry in a chorus. Nothing exists in the human mind other than what is introduced by experience, and we judge a thing on no ground other than that of acquired ideas. They go farther. They dare to reject this evident and universal accord of all nations. And in the face of this striking uniformity in men's judgment, they go and look in the shadows for some obscure example known to them alone—as if all the inclinations of nature were annihilated by the depravity of a single people, and the species were no longer anything as soon as there are monsters. But what is the use of the torments to which the skeptic Montaigne subjects himself in order to unearth in some corner of the world a custom opposed to the notions of justice? Of what use is it to him to give to the most suspect travelers the authority he refuses to give to the most celebrated writers? [52] Will some uncertain and bizarre practices, based on local causes unknown to us, destroy the general induction drawn from the concurrence of all peoples, who disagree about everything else and agree on this point alone? O Montaigne, you who pride yourself on frankness and truth, be sincere and true, if a philosopher can be, and tell me whether there is some country on earth where it is a crime to keep one's faith, to be clement, beneficent, and generous, where the good man is contemptible and the perfidious one honored?

It is said that everyone contributes to the public good for his own interest. But what then is the source of the just man's contributing to it to his prejudice? What is going to one's death for one's interest? No doubt, no one acts for anything other than for his good; but if there is not a moral good which must be taken into account, one will never explain by private interest anything but the action of the wicked. It is not even likely that anyone will attempt to go farther. This would be too abominable a philosophy—one which is embarrassed by virtuous actions, which could get around the difficulty only by fabricating base intentions and motives without virtue, which would be forced to vilify Socrates and calumniate Regulus. If ever such doctrines could spring up among us, the voice of nature as well as that of reason would immediately be raised against them and would never leave a single one of their partisans the excuse that he is of good faith.

It is not my design here to enter into metaphysical discussions which are out of my reach and yours, and which, at bottom, lead to nothing. I have already told you that I wanted not to philosophize with you but to help you consult your heart. Were all the philosophers to prove that I am wrong, if you sense that I am right, I do not wish for more.

For that purpose I need only to make you distinguish our acquired ideas from our natural sentiments; for we sense before knowing, and

since we do not learn to want what is good for us and to flee what is bad for us but rather get this will from nature, by that very fact love of the good and hatred of the bad are as natural as the love of ourselves. The acts of the conscience are not judgments but sentiments. Although all our ideas come to us from outside, the sentiments evaluating them are within us, and it is by them alone that we know the compatibility or incompatibility between us and the things we ought to seek or flee.

To exist, for us, is to sense; our sensibility is incontestably anterior to our intelligence, and we had sentiments before ideas. Whatever the cause of our being, it has provided for our preservation by giving us sentiments suitable to our nature, and it could not be denied that these, at least, are innate. These sentiments, as far as the individual is concerned, are the love of self, the fear of pain, the horror of death, the desire of well-being. But if, as cannot be doubted, man is by his nature sociable, or at least made to become so, he can be so only by means of other innate sentiments relative to his species; for if we consider only physical need, it ought certainly to disperse men instead of bringing them together. It is from the moral system formed by this double relation to oneself and to one's fellows that the impulse of conscience is born. To know the good is not to love it; man does not have innate knowledge of it, but as soon as his reason makes him know it, his conscience leads him to love it. It is this sentiment which is innate.

Thus I do not believe, my friend, that it is impossible to explain, by the consequences of our nature, the immediate principle of the conscience independently of reason itself. And were that impossible, it would moreover not be necessary; for, those who deny this principle, admitted and recognized by all mankind, do not prove that it does not exist but are satisfied with affirming that it does not; so when we affirm that it does exist, we are just as well founded as they are, and we have in addition the inner witness and the voice of conscience, which testifies on its own behalf. If the first glimmers of judgment dazzle us and at first make a blur of objects in our sight, let us wait for our weak eyes to open up again and steady themselves, and soon we shall see these same objects again in the light of reason as nature first showed them to us. Or, rather, let us be more simple and less vain. Let us limit ourselves to the first sentiments that we find in ourselves, since study always leads us back to them when it has not led us astray.

Conscience, conscience! Divine instinct, immortal and celestial voice, certain guide of a being that is ignorant and limited but intelligent and free; infallible judge of good and bad which makes man like unto God; it is you who make the excellence of his nature and the morality of his actions. Without you I sense nothing in me that raises me above the beasts, other than the sad privilege of leading myself astray from error to error with the aid of an understanding without rule and a reason without principle.

Thank heaven, we are delivered from all that terrifying apparatus of philosophy. We can be men without being scholars. Dispensed from consuming our life in the study of morality, we have at less expense a more certain guide in this immense maze of human opinions. But it is not enough that this guide exists; one must know how to recognize it

and to follow it. If it speaks to all hearts, then why are there so few of them who hear it? Well, this is because it speaks to us in nature's language, which everything has made us forget. Conscience is timid; it likes refuge and peace. The world and noise scare it; the prejudices from which they claim it is born are its cruelest enemies. It flees or keeps quiet before them. Their noisy voices stifle its voice and prevent it from making itself heard. Fanaticism dares to counterfeit it and to dictate crime in its name. It finally gives up as a result of being dismissed. It no longer speaks to us. It no longer responds to us. And after such long contempt for it, to recall it costs as much as banishing it did.

How many times in my researches have I grown weary as a result of the coldness I felt within me! How many times have sadness and boredom, spreading their poison over my first meditations, made them unbearable for me! My arid heart provided only a languid and lukewarm zeal to the love of truth. I said to myself, "Why torment myself in seeking what is not? Moral good is only a chimera. There is nothing good but the pleasures of the senses." O, when one has once lost the taste for the pleasures of the soul, how difficult it is to regain it! How much more difficult gaining it is when one has never had it! If there existed a man miserable enough to be unable to recall anything he had done in all his life which made him satisfied with himself and glad to have lived, that man would be incapable of ever knowing himself; and for want of feeling the goodness suitable to his nature, he would necessarily remain wicked and be eternally unhappy. But do you believe there is a single man on the whole earth depraved enough never to have yielded in his heart to the temptation of doing good? This temptation is so natural and so sweet that it is impossible always to resist it, and the memory of the pleasure that it once produced suffices to recall it constantly. Unfortunately it is at first hard to satisfy. One has countless reasons to reject the inclination of one's heart. False prudence confines it within the limits of the human *I*; countless efforts of courage are needed to dare to cross those limits. To enjoy doing good is the reward for having done good, and this reward is obtained only after having deserved it. Nothing is more lovable than virtue, but one must possess it to find it so. Virtue is similar to Proteus in the fable: when one wants to embrace it, it at first takes on countless terrifying forms and finally reveals itself in its own form only to those who did not let go.

Constantly caught up in the combat between my natural sentiments, which spoke for the common interest, and my reason, which related everything to me, I would have drifted all my life in this continual alternation—doing the bad, loving the good, always in contradiction with myself—if new lights had not illuminated my heart, and if the truth, which settled my opinions, had not also made my conduct certain and put me in agreement with myself. For all that one might want to establish virtue by reason alone, what solid base can one give it? Virtue, they say, is the love of order. But can and should this love win out in me over that of my own well-being? Let them give me a clear and sufficient reason for preferring it. At bottom, their alleged principle is a pure play on words; for I say that vice is the love of order, taken in a different sense. There is some moral order wherever there

is sentiment and intelligence. The difference is that the good man orders himself in relation to the whole, and the wicked one orders the whole in relation to himself. The latter makes himself the center of all things; the former measures his radius and keeps to the circumference. Then he is ordered in relation to the common center, which is God, and in relation to all the concentric circles, which are the creatures. If the divinity does not exist, it is only the wicked man who reasons, and the good man is nothing but a fool.

O my child! May you one day sense what a weight one is relieved of when, after having exhausted the vanity of human opinions and tasted the bitterness of the passions, one finally finds so near to oneself the road of wisdom, the reward of this life's labors, and the source of the happiness of which one has despaired. All the duties of the natural law, which were almost erased from my heart by the injustice of men, are recalled to it in the name of the eternal justice which imposes them on me and sees me fulfill them. I no longer sense that I am anything but the work and the instrument of the great Being who wants what is good, who does it, and who will do what is good for me through the conjunction of my will and His and through the good use of my liberty. I acquiesce in the order that this Being establishes, sure that one day I myself will enjoy this order and find my felicity in it; for what felicity is sweeter than sensing that one is ordered in a system in which everything is good? Subject to pain, I bear it with patience in thinking that it is fleeting and that it comes from a body that does not belong to me. If I do a good deed without a witness, I know that it is seen, and I make a record for the other life of my conduct in this one. In suffering an injustice, I say to myself, "The just Being who rules everything will certainly know how to compensate me for it." The needs of my body and the miseries of my life make the idea of death more bearable for me. They will be so many fewer bonds to break when it is necessary to leave everything.

Why is my soul subjected to my senses and chained to this body which enslaves it and interferes with it? I know nothing about it. Did I take part in God's decrees? But I can, without temerity, form modest conjectures. I tell myself: "If man's mind had remained free and pure, what merit would he gain from loving and following the order which he saw established and which he would have no interest in troubling? He would be happy, it is true. But his happiness would be lacking the most sublime degree, the glory of virtue and the good witness of oneself. He would be only like the angels, and doubtless the virtuous man will be more than they are. He is united to a mortal body by a bond no less powerful than incomprehensible. The care for this body's preservation incites the soul to relate everything to the body and gives it an interest contrary to the general order, which the soul is nevertheless capable of seeing and loving. It is then that the good use of the soul's liberty becomes both its merit and its recompense, and that it prepares itself an incorruptible happiness in combating its terrestrial passions and maintaining itself in its first will."

If, even in the state of abasement which we are in during this life,

all our first inclinations are legitimate, and if all our vices come to us from ourselves, why do we complain of being subjugated by them? Why do we reproach the Author of things for the evils we do to ourselves and the enemies we arm against ourselves? Ah, let us not corrupt man! He will always be good without difficulty and always be happy without remorse! The guilty who say they are forced to crime are as dishonest as they are wicked. How is it they do not see that the weakness of which they complain is their own work; that their first depravity comes from their own will; that by willing to yield to their temptations, they finally yield to them in spite of themselves and make them irresistible? It is doubtless no longer in their power not to be wicked and weak; but not becoming so was in their power. Oh how easily we would remain masters of ourselves and of our passions—even during this life—if when our habits were not yet acquired, when our mind was beginning to open, we knew how to occupy it with the objects that it ought to know in order to evaluate those which it does not know; if we sincerely wanted to enlighten ourselves—not to be conspicuous in others' eyes, but to be good and wise according to our nature, to make ourselves happy in practicing our duties! This study appears boring and painful to us because we think about it only when we are already corrupted by vice, already given over to our passions. We settle our judgments and our esteem before knowing good and bad, and then, in relating everything to this false measure, we give to nothing its just value.

There is an age when the heart is still free, but ardent, restless, avid for the happiness it does not know; it seeks it with a curiosity born of incertitude and, deceived by the senses, finally settles on a vain image of happiness and believes it has found it where it is not. These illusions have lasted too long for me. Alas, I recognized them too late and have been unable to destroy them completely. They will last as long as this mortal body which causes them. At least, although they may very well seduce me, they no longer deceive me. I know them for what they are; in following them, I despise them. Far from seeing them as the object of my happiness, I see them as its obstacle. I aspire to the moment when, after being delivered from the shackles of the body, I shall be *me* without contradiction or division and shall need only myself in order to be happy. While waiting, I am already happy in this life because I take little account of all its ills, because I regard it as almost foreign to my being, and because all the true good that I can get out of it depends on me.

To raise myself beforehand as much as possible to this condition of happiness, strength, and freedom, I practice sublime contemplations. I meditate on the order of the universe, not in order to explain it by vain systems but to admire it constantly, to worship the wise Author who makes himself felt in it. I converse with Him; I fill all my faculties with His divine essence; I am moved by His benefactions; I bless Him for his gifts. But I do not pray to Him. What would I ask of Him? That He change the course of things for me, that He perform miracles in my favor? I who ought to love, above all, the order established by His

wisdom and maintained by His providence, would I want this order to be disturbed for me? No, this rash wish would deserve to be punished rather than fulfilled. Nor do I ask Him for the power to do good. Why ask Him for what He has given me? Did He not give me conscience for loving the good, reason for knowing it, and liberty for choosing it? If I do the bad, I have no excuse. I do it because I want to. To ask Him to change my will is to ask Him what He asks of me. It is to want Him to do my work while I collect the wages for it. Not to be contented with my condition is to want no longer to be a man, it is to want something other than what is, it is to want disorder and evil. Source of justice and truth, God, clement and good, in my confidence in You, the supreme wish of my heart is that Your will be done! In joining my will to Yours, I do what you do; I acquiesce in Your goodness; I believe that I share beforehand in the supreme felicity which is its reward.

As I justly distrust myself, the only thing that I ask of Him, or rather that I expect of His justice, is to correct my error if I am led astray and if this error is dangerous to me. The fact that I act in good faith does not mean I believe myself infallible. Those of my opinions which seem truest to me are perhaps so many lies; for what man does not hold on to his opinions, and how many men agree about everything? The illusion deceiving me may very well come from myself; it is He alone who can cure me of it. I have done what I could to attain the truth, but its source is too elevated. If the strength for going farther is lacking to me, of what can I be guilty? It is up to the truth to come nearer.

The good priest had spoken with vehemence. He was moved, and so was I. I believed I was hearing the divine Orpheus sing the first hymns and teaching men the worship of the gods. Nevertheless I saw a multitude of objections to make to him. I did not make any of them, because they were less solid than disconcerting, and persuasiveness was on his side. To the extent that he spoke to me according to his conscience, mine seemed to confirm what he had told me.

The sentiments you have just expounded to me, I said to him, appear more novel in what you admit you do not know than in what you say you believe. I see in them pretty nearly the theism or the natural religion that the Christians pretend to confound with atheism or irreligiousness, which is the directly contrary doctrine. But in the present condition of my faith I have to ascend rather than descend in order to adopt your opinions, and I find it difficult to remain precisely at the point where you are without being as wise as you. In order to be at least as sincere as you, I want to take counsel with myself. Following your example, I ought to be guided by the inner sentiment. You yourself have taught me that, after one has long imposed silence on it, to recall it is not the business of a moment. I will carry your discourse with me in my heart. I must meditate on it. If after taking careful counsel with myself, I remain as convinced of it as you are, you will be my final apostle, and I shall be your proselyte unto death. Continue, however, to instruct me. You have only told me half of what I must know. Speak to me of revelation, of the scriptures, of those obscure dogmas through which I have been wandering since childhood,

without being able either to conceive or to believe them and without knowing how I could either accept or reject them.

Yes, my child, he said, embracing me, I shall finish telling you what I think. I do not want to open my heart to you halfway. But the desire you give evidence of was necessary to authorize my having no reserve with you. I have told you nothing up to now which I did not believe could be useful to you and of which I was not profoundly persuaded. The examination which remains to be made is very different. I see in it only perplexity, mystery, and obscurity. I bring to it only uncertainty and distrust. I decide only in trembling, and I tell you my doubts rather than my opinions. If your sentiments were more stable, I would hesitate to expound mine to you. But in your present condition you will profit from thinking as I do.* Moreover, attribute to my discourse only the authority of reason. I do not know whether I am in error. It is difficult in discussion not to adopt an assertive tone sometimes. But remember that all my assertions here are only reasons for doubt. Seek the truth yourself. As for me, I promise you only good faith.

You see in my exposition only natural religion. It is very strange that any other is needed! How shall I know this necessity? What can I be guilty of in serving God according to the understanding He gives to my mind and the sentiments He inspires in my heart? What purity of morality, what dogma useful to man and honorable to his Author can I derive from a positive doctrine which I cannot derive without it from the good use of my faculties? Show me what one can add, for the glory of God, for the good of society, and for my own advantage, to the duties of the natural law, and what virtue you produce from a new form of worship that is not a result of mine? The greatest ideas of the divinity come to us from reason alone. View the spectacle of nature; hear the inner voice. Has God not told everything to our eyes, to our conscience, to our judgment? What more will men tell us? Their revelations have only the effect of degrading God by giving Him human passions. I see that particular dogmas, far from clarifying the notions of the great Being, confuse them; that far from ennobling them, they debase them; that to the inconceivable mysteries surrounding the great Being they add absurd contradictions; that they make man proud, intolerant, and cruel; that, instead of establishing peace on earth, they bring sword and fire to it. I ask myself what good all this does, without knowing what to answer. I see in it only the crimes of men and the miseries of mankind.

I am told that a revelation was needed to teach men the way God wanted to be served. They present as proof the diversity of bizarre forms of worship which have been instituted, and do not see that this very diversity comes from the fancifulness [53] of revelations. As soon as peoples took it into their heads to make God speak, each made Him speak in its own way and made Him say what it wanted. If one had listened only to what God says to the heart of man, there would never have been more than one religion on earth.

* This is, I believe, what the good vicar could say to the public at present.

There had to be uniformity of worship. Very well. But was this point so important that the whole apparatus of divine power was needed to establish it? Let us not confuse the ceremony of religion with religion itself. The worship God asks for is that of the heart. And that worship, when it is sincere, is always uniform. One must be possessed of a mad vanity indeed to imagine that God takes so great an interest in the form of the priest's costume, in the order of the words he pronounces, in the gestures he makes at the altar, and in all his genuflexions. Ah, my friend, remain upright! You will always be near enough to the earth. God wants to be revered in spirit and in truth. This is the duty of all religions, all countries, all men. As to the external worship, if it must be uniform for the sake of good order, that is purely a question of public policy; no revelation is needed for that.

I did not begin with all these reflections. I was carried along by the prejudices of education and by that dangerous *amour-propre* which always wants to carry man above his sphere, and, unable to raise my feeble conceptions up to the great Being, I made an effort to lower Him down to my level. I reduced the infinite distance He has put in the relations between His nature and mine. I wanted more immediate communications, more particular instructions; not content with making God like man, I wanted supernatural understanding in order that I myself would be privileged among my fellows, I wanted an exclusive form of worship; I wanted God to have said to me what He had not said to others, or what others had not understood in the same way as I did.

Regarding the point at which I had arrived as the common point from which all believers start in order to arrive at a more enlightened form of worship, I found nothing in natural religion but the elements of every religion. I considered this diversity of sects which reign on earth, and which accuse each other of lying and error. I asked, "Which is the right one?" Each answered, "It is mine." * Each said, "I and my partisans alone think rightly; all the others are in error." "And how do you know that your sect is the right one?" "Because God said so." "And who told you that God said so?" "My pastor, who certainly knows. My pastor told me this is what to believe, and this is what I believe. He assures me that all those who say something other than he does are lying, and I do not listen to them."

What, I thought, is the truth not one, and can what is true for me

* A good and wise priest says:

All say that they get it and believe it (and all use this jargon) not from men nor from any creature but from God.

But to tell the truth without any flattery or disguise, there is nothing to it. Religions are, whatever is said, gotten from human hands and by human means. Witness first the way religions were and still are received every day in the world by individuals: nation, country, and place give religion. One belongs to the religion observed in the place where one is born and raised. We are circumcised, baptised, Jews, Mohammedans, Christians before we know that we are men. Religion is not of our choice and election. Witness next how ways of life and morals are in such poor agreement with religion. Witness that on human and very slight occasions one goes counter to the tenor of one's religion. [Charron, *de la Sagesse,* vol. II, chap. 5, p. 257, Bordeaux edition 1601.]

It appears very much as though the sincere profession of faith of the virtuous theologal of Condam would not have been very different from that of the Savoyard Vicar.[54]

be false for you? If the methods of the man who follows the right road and of the man who goes astray are the same, what merit or what fault belongs to one of these men more than the other? Their choice is the effect of chance; to blame them for it is iniquitous. It is to reward or punish them for being born in this or in that country. To dare to say that God judges us in this way is to insult His justice.

Either all religions are good and agreeable to God; or if there is one which He prescribes to men and punishes them for refusing to recognize, He has given it certain and manifest signs so that it is distinguished and known as the only true one. These signs exist in all times and all places, equally to be grasped by all men, great and small, learned and ignorant, Europeans, Indians, Africans, savages. If there were a religion on earth outside of whose worship there was only eternal suffering, and if in some place in the world a single mortal of good faith had not been struck by its obviousness, the God of that religion would be the most iniquitous and cruel of tyrants.

Are we, then, sincerely seeking the truth? Let us grant nothing to the right of birth and to the authority of fathers and pastors, but let us recall for the examination of conscience and reason all that they have taught us from our youth. They may very well cry out, "Subject your reason." He who deceives me can say as much. I need reasons for subjecting my reason.

All the theology that I can acquire on my own from the inspection of the universe and by the good use of my faculties is limited to what I have explained to you previously. To know more one must have recourse to extraordinary means. These means could not be the authority of men; for since no man belongs to a different species from me, all that a man knows naturally I too can know, and another man can be mistaken as well as I. When I believe what he says, it is not because he says it but because he proves it. Therefore the testimony of men is at bottom only that of my own reason and adds nothing to the natural means God gave me for knowing the truth.

Apostle of the truth, what then have you to tell me of which I do not remain the judge? "God Himself has spoken. Hear His revelation." That is something else. God has spoken! That is surely a great statement. To whom has He spoken? "He has spoken to men." Why, then, did I hear nothing about it? "He has directed other men to give you His word." I understand: it is men who are going to tell me what God has said. I should have preferred to have heard God Himself. It would have cost Him nothing more, and I would have been sheltered from seduction. "He gives you a guarantee in making manifest the mission of his messengers." How is that? "By miracles." And where are these miracles? "In books." And who wrote these books? "Men." And who saw these miracles? "Men who attest to them." What! Always human testimony? Always men who report to me what other men have reported! So many men between God and me! Nevertheless let us see, examine, compare, verify. Oh, if God had deigned to relieve me of all this labor, would I have served him any less heartily?

Consider, my friend, in what a horrible discussion I am now engaged, what immense erudition I need to go back to the most remote antiquity

—to examine, weigh, and compare the prophecies, the revelations, the facts, all the monuments of faith put forth in every country of the world, to fix times, places, authors, occasions! What critical precision is necessary for me to distinguish the authentic documents from the forged ones; to compare the objections to the responses, the translations to the originals; to judge of the impartiality of witnesses, of their good sense, of their understanding; to know whether anything has been suppressed, anything added, anything transposed, changed, falsified; to resolve the contradictions which remain; to judge what weight should be given to the silence of adversaries concerning facts alleged against them; whether these allegations were known to them; whether they took them seriously enough to deign to respond; whether books were common enough for ours to reach them; whether we have been of good enough faith to allow their books to circulate among us and to let remain their strongest objections just as they made them.

Once all these monuments are recognized as incontestable, one must next move on to the proofs of their authors' mission. One must have a good knowledge of all of the following: the laws of probability and the likelihood of events, in order to judge which predictions cannot be fulfilled without a miracle; the particular genius of the original languages, in order to distinguish what is prediction in these languages and what is only figure of speech; which facts belong to the order of nature and which other facts do not, so as to be able to say to what extent a skillful man can fascinate the eyes of simple people and can amaze even enlightened ones; how to discern to which species a miracle ought to belong and what authenticity it ought to have—not only for it to be believed, but for it to be a punishable offense to doubt it; how to compare the proof of true and false miracles and how to find certain rules for discerning them; and, finally, how to explain why God chose, for attesting to His word, means which themselves have so great a need of attestation, as though He were playing on men's credulity and intentionally avoiding the true means of persuading them.

Let us suppose that the divine Majesty were to deign to lower itself sufficiently to make a man the organ of its sacred will. Is it reasonable, is it just to demand that all of mankind obey the voice of this minister without making him known to it as such? Is there equity in providing this minister as his only credentials some special signs given to a few obscure people, signs of which all the rest of men will never know anything except by hearsay? In every country in the world, if one were to accept the truth of all the miracles which the people and the simple folk say they have seen, every sect would be the right one; there would be more miracles than natural events, and the greatest of all miracles would be if there were not miracles wherever fanatics are persecuted. It is the unalterable order of nature which best shows the Supreme Being. If many exceptions took place, I would no longer know what to think; and as for me, I believe too much in God to believe in so many miracles that are so little worthy of Him.

Let a man come and use this language with us: "Mortals, I announce the will of the Most High to you. Recognize in my voice Him who sends me. I order the sun to change its course, the stars to form another

arrangement, the mountains to become level, the waters to rise up, the earth to change its aspect." At these marvels who will not instantly recognize the Master of nature? It does not obey impostors. Their miracles are worked at crossroads, in deserts, within the confines of a room; it is there that they have an easy time with a small number of spectators already disposed to believe everything. Who will dare to tell me how many eyewitnesses are needed in order to make a miracle worthy of faith? If your miracles, which are performed to prove your doctrine, themselves need to be proved, of what use are they? You might as well perform none.

The most important examination of the proclaimed doctrine remains. For since those who say that God performs miracles on earth also claim that the Devil sometimes imitates them, we are no farther advanced than before, even with the best-attested miracles; and since the magicians of Pharaoh dared, in the very presence of Moses, to produce the same signs he did by God's express order, why would they not in his absence have claimed, with the same credentials, the same authority? Thus, after the doctrine has been proved by the miracle, the miracle has to be proved by the doctrine,* for fear of taking the Demon's work for God's work. What do you think of this vicious circle?

Doctrine coming from God ought to bear the sacred character of the divinity. Not only should it clarify for us the confused ideas which reasoning draws in our mind, but it should also propound a form of worship, a morality, and maxims that are suitable to the attributes with which we conceive His essence on our own. If it taught us only things that are absurd and without reason, if it inspired in us only sentiments of aversion for our fellows and terror for ourselves, if it depicted for us only a god who is angry, jealous, vengeful, partisan, one who hates men, a god of war and battles always ready to destroy and strike down, always speaking of torments and suffering, and boasting of punishing even the innocent, my heart would not be attracted toward this terrible god, and I would take care not to give up the natural religion for this one. For you surely see that one must necessarily choose. Your God is not ours, I would say to its sectarians. He who begins by choosing a single people for Himself and proscribing the rest of mankind is not the common Father of men. He who destines the great majority of His

* This is explicit in countless passages of scripture, among others Deuteronomy 13, where it is said that if a prophet proclaiming foreign gods confirms his speeches by miracles and what he predicts comes to pass, far from paying any attention to him, one ought to put this prophet to death. Thus, when pagans put to death apostles proclaiming a foreign god and proving their mission by predictions and miracles, I do not see what solid objection there was to the pagans which they could not instantly turn back against us. Now, what is to be done in such a case? One thing only. Return to reasoning, and leave aside the miracles. It would have been better not to have had recourse to them. This is the simplest good sense, which is obscured only by dint of distinctions that at the very least are quite subtle. Subtleties in Christianity! But was Jesus Christ wrong then, to promise the Kingdom of Heaven to the simple? Was he wrong, then, to begin the most beautiful of his speeches by congratulating the poor in spirit, if so much spirit is needed to understand his doctrine and to learn how to believe in him? When you have proved to me that I ought to submit, all will be quite well. But to prove that to me, put yourself within my reach. Measure your reasonings according to the capacity of a poor spirit, or I no longer recognize in you the true disciple of your master, and it is not his doctrine that you proclaim to me.

creatures to eternal torment is not the clement and good God my reason has shown me.

With respect to dogmas, my reason tells me that they ought to be clear, luminous, and striking by their obviousness. If natural religion is insufficient, this is due to the obscurity in which it leaves the great truths it teaches us. It is for revelation to teach us these truths in a manner evident to man's mind, to put them within his reach, to make him conceive them in order that he may believe them. Faith is given certainty and solidity by the understanding. The best of all religions is infallibly the clearest. He who burdens the worship he teaches me with mysteries and contradictions teaches me thereby to distrust it. The God I worship is not a god of shadows. He did not endow me with an understanding in order to forbid me its use. To tell me to subject my reason is to insult its Author. The minister of the truth does not tyrannize my reason; he enlightens it.

We have set aside all human authority, and without it I cannot see how one man can convince another by preaching an unreasonable doctrine to him. Let us have these two men confront each other for a moment and find out what they can say to one another, using that harshness of language which is usual for the two parties.

THE INSPIRED MAN Reason teaches you that the whole is greater than its part, but I teach you on behalf of God that it is the part which is greater than the whole.

THE REASONER And who are you to dare tell me that God contradicts Himself, and whom would I prefer to believe—Him who teaches me eternal truths by reason, or you who proclaim an absurdity on His behalf?

THE INSPIRED MAN Me, for my instruction is more positive, and I am going to prove invincibly that it is He Who sends me.

THE REASONER How? You will prove to me that it is God who sends you to testify against Him? And what kind of proof will you use to convince me that it is more certain that God speaks to me by your mouth than by the understanding He gave me?

THE INSPIRED MAN The understanding He gave you! Small and vain man! As if you were the first impious person led astray by his reason corrupted by sin!

THE REASONER Nor would you, man of God, be the first imposter who gave his arrogance as proof of his mission.

THE INSPIRED MAN What! Do philosophers, too, indulge in insults?

THE REASONER Sometimes, when saints set the example for them.

THE INSPIRED MAN Oh, I have the right to. I speak on God's behalf.

THE REASONER It would be well to show me your credentials before making use of your privileges.

THE INSPIRED MAN My credentials are authentic. The earth and the heavens will testify for me. Follow my reasonings carefully, I beg you.

THE REASONER Your reasonings! You are not thinking. To teach me that my reason deceives me, is that not to refute what it has said in your favor? Whoever wants to impugn reason should convince others without making use of it. For let us suppose that you have convinced

me by reasoning; how will I know whether it is not my reason, corrupted by sin, which makes me acquiesce to what you tell me? Moreover, what proof, what demonstration will you ever be able to use that is more evident than the axiom it is supposed to destroy? It is just as believable that a good syllogism is a lie as it is that the part is greater than the whole.

THE INSPIRED MAN What a difference! My proofs are irrefutable. They belong to a supernatural order.

THE REASONER Supernatural! What does that word mean? I do not understand it.

THE INSPIRED MAN Changes in the order of nature, prophecies, miracles, wonders of every sort.

THE REASONER Wonders, miracles! I have never seen anything of the kind.

THE INSPIRED MAN Others have seen it for you. Crowds of witnesses, the testimony of peoples . . .

THE REASONER Is the testimony of peoples of a supernatural order?

THE INSPIRED MAN No, but when it is unanimous, it is incontestable.

THE REASONER There is nothing more incontestable than the principles of reason, and an absurdity cannot be made authoritative by the testimony of men. Once again, let us see supernatural proofs, for the attestation of mankind is not such a proof.

THE INSPIRED MAN O hardened heart! Grace does not speak to you.

THE REASONER It is not my fault, for, according to you, one must have already received grace to be able to ask for it. Therefore, begin to speak to me in place of it.

THE INSPIRED MAN Ah, that is what I am doing, and you do not hear me. But what do you say of prophecies?

THE REASONER I say, in the first place, that I have no more heard prophecies than I have seen miracles. I say, moreover, that no prophecy could be an authority for me.

THE INSPIRED MAN Henchman of the Demon! And why are prophecies not an authority for you?

THE REASONER Because for them to be an authority three things would be required whose coincidence is impossible: that is, that I was witness to the prophecy, that I was witness to the event, and that it was demonstrated to me that this event could not have tallied fortuitously with the prophecy. For even if a prophecy were more precise, more clear, and more luminous than an axiom of geometry, the clarity of a prediction made at random does not make its fulfillment impossible; and therefore when that fulfillment does take place, it is not a strict proof of anything about him who predicted it.

See, then, what your alleged supernatural proofs, your miracles and prophecies come down to: a belief in all this on the faith of others, and a subjection of the authority of God, speaking to my reason, to the authority of men. If the eternal truths which my mind conceives could be impaired, there would no longer be any kind of certainty for me, and far from being sure that you speak to me on behalf of God, I would not even be sure that He exists.

There are many difficulties here, my child, and these are not all. Among so many diverse religions which mutually proscribe and exclude one another, a single one is the right one, if indeed there is a right one. In order to recognize it, it is not sufficient to examine one of them; they must all be examined, and in any matter whatsoever one must not condemn without hearing.* The objections must be compared to the proofs; it must be known what each objects to in the others, and what it responds to their objections against itself. The more a sentiment appears to us to have been demonstrated, the more we ought to try to find out the basis for so many men's not finding it so. One would have to be quite simple to believe that it suffices to hear the learned men of one's own party to inform oneself of the arguments of the opposing party. Where are the theologians who pride themselves on good faith? Where are those who, in order to refute the arguments of their adversaries, do not begin by weakening them? Each shines in his own party; but one who in the midst of his own people is proud of his proofs would cut a very foolish figure with these same proofs among people of another party. Do you want to inform yourself from books? What erudition must be acquired, how many languages must be learned, how many libraries must be gone through, what an immense amount of reading must be done! Who will guide me in the choice? It will be difficult to find in one country the best books of the opposing party, and even more so those of all the parties. If one were to find them, they would soon be refuted. The absent party is always wrong, and poor arguments spoken with assurance easily efface good ones expounded with contempt. Moreover, there is often nothing which is more deceptive than books, and which renders less faithfully the sentiments of those who wrote them. If you had wanted to judge the Catholic faith on the basis of Bossuet's book,[56] you would have discovered that you were wide of the mark after having lived among us. You would have seen that the doctrine used to respond to the Protestants is not the one taught to the people, and that Bossuet's book bears little resemblance to the instructions of the sermon. In order to judge a religion well, it is necessary not to study it in the books of its sectarians, but to go and learn it amongst them. That is very different. Each religion has its traditions, its views, its customs, and its prejudices which constitute the spirit of its belief and must also be considered for it to be judged.

How many great peoples print no books and do not read ours! How can they judge our opinions? How can we judge theirs? We scoff at them, they despise us; and if our travelers ridicule them, they need only travel among us to return the favor. In what country are there

* Plutarch reports that the Stoics maintained, among other bizarre paradoxes, that in an adversary proceeding it was useless to hear the two parties; for, they say, either the first has proved his assertion, or he has not proved it. If he has proved it, there is nothing more to say, and his adversary ought to be condemned. If he has not proved it, he is wrong, and his suit ought to be dismissed. I find that the method of all those who accept an exclusive revelation closely resembles that of these Stoics. As soon as each claims to be the only right one, it is necessary, in order to choose among so many parties, to listen to them all; otherwise, one is being unjust.[55]

not sensible people, people of good faith, decent people, friends of the truth who, in order to profess it, would need only to know it? However, each sees the truth in his own worship and finds absurd the worship of other nations. Therefore, either these foreign forms of worship are not as extravagant as they seem to us, or the reason we find in our own proves nothing.

We have three principal religions in Europe. One accepts a single revelation, the second accepts two, the third accepts three. Each detests and curses the other two, accusing them of being blind, hard-hearted, opinionated, and dishonest. What impartial man will dare to judge among them if he has not carefully weighed their proofs, carefully listened to their arguments? The religion which accepts only one revelation is the oldest and appears to be the most certain. The one which accepts three is the most modern and appears to be the most consistent. The one which accepts two and rejects the third may very well be the best, but it certainly has all the prejudices against it. The inconsistency leaps to the eyes.

In the three revelations the sacred books are written in languages unknown to the people who follow them. The Jews no longer understand Hebrew; the Christians understand neither Hebrew nor Greek; neither the Turks nor the Persians understand Arabic, and the modern Arabs themselves no longer speak the language of Mohammed. Is this not a simple way of instructing men—always speaking to them in a language they do not understand? These books are translated, it will be said. A fine answer! Who will assure me that these books are faithfully translated, that it is even possible that they be? And if God has gone so far as to speak to men, why must He need an interpreter?

I shall never be able to conceive that what every man is obliged to know is confined to books, and that someone who does not have access to these books, or to those who understand them, is punished for an ignorance which is involuntary. Always books! What a mania. Because Europe is full of books, Europeans regard them as indispensable, without thinking that in three-quarters of the earth they have never been seen. Were not all books written by men? Why, then, would man need them to know his duties, and what means had he of knowing them before these books were written? Either he will learn these duties by himself, or he is excused from knowing them.

Our Catholics make a great to-do about the authority of the Church; but what do they gain by that, if they need as great an apparatus of proofs to establish this authority as other sects need for establishing their doctrine directly? The Church decides that the Church has the right to decide. Is that not an authority based on good proofs? Step outside of that, and you return to all our discussions.

Do you know many Christians who have taken the effort to examine with care what Judaism alleges against them? If some individuals have seen something of this, it is in the books of Christians. A good way of informing oneself about their adversaries' arguments! But what is there to do? If someone dared to publish among us books in which Judaism were openly favored, we would punish the author, the publisher, the

bookseller.* This is a convenient and sure policy for always being right. There is a pleasure in refuting people who do not dare to speak.

Those among us who have access to conversation with Jews are not much farther advanced. These unfortunates feel themselves to be at our mercy. The tyranny practiced against them makes them fearful. They know how little troubled Christian charity is by injustice and cruelty. What will they dare to say without laying themselves open to our accusing them of blasphemy? Greed gives us zeal, and they are too rich not to be wrong. The most learned, the most enlightened among them are always the most circumspect. You will convert some miserable fellow, who is paid to calumniate his sect. You will put words into the mouths of some vile old-clothes dealers, who will yield in order to flatter you. You will triumph over their ignorance or their cowardice, while their learned men will smile in silence at your ineptitude. But do you believe that in places where they feel secure you would win out over them so cheaply? At the Sorbonne it is as clear as day that the predictions about the Messiah relate to Jesus Christ. Among the Amsterdam rabbis it is just as clear that they do not have the least relation to Jesus. I shall never believe that I have seriously heard the arguments of the Jews until they have a free state, schools, and universities, where they can speak and dispute without risk. Only then will we be able to know what they have to say.

At Constantinople the Turks state their arguments, but we do not dare to state our own. There it is our turn to crawl. If the Turks demand from us the same respect for Mohammed that we demand for Jesus Christ from the Jews, who do not believe in him any more than we believe in Mohammed, are the Turks wrong? Are we right? According to what equitable principle shall we resolve this question?

Two-thirds of mankind are neither Jews nor Mohammedans nor Christians, and how many million men have never heard of Moses, Jesus Christ, or Mohammed? This is denied; it is maintained that our missionaries go everywhere. That is easily said. But do they go into the still unknown heart of Africa, where no European has ever penetrated up to now? Do they go to deepest Tartary, to follow on horseback the wandering hordes who are never approached by a foreigner, and who, far from having heard of the Pope, hardly even know of the Grand Lama? Do they go into the immense continents of America, where whole nations still do not know that peoples from another world have set foot in theirs? Do they go to Japan, from which their maneuvers got them thrown out forever, and where their predecessors are known to the generations now being born only as guileful intriguers who came with a hypocritical zeal to take hold of the empire by stealth? Do they go into the harems of the princes of Asia to proclaim the Gospel to thousands of poor slaves? What have the women of this part of the

* Among countless known facts, here is one which needs no commentary. In the sixteenth century the Catholic theologians had condemned to the fire all the books of the Jews, without exception. The illustrious and learned Reuchlin, consulted about this affair, brought upon himself terrible troubles which almost ruined him merely by expressing the opinion that one could preserve those books which were not anti-Christian and which dealt with matters neutral to religion.[57]

world done to prevent any missionary from preaching the faith to them? Will they all go to hell for having been recluses?

Even if it were true that the Gospel has been proclaimed everywhere on earth, what would be gained by it? Surely on the eve of the day that the first missionary arrived in some country, someone died there who was not able to hear him. Now tell me what we are going to do with that person? If there were only a single man in the whole universe who had never been preached to about Jesus Christ, the objection would be as strong for that single man as for a quarter of mankind.

Even if the ministers of the Gospel have made themselves heard by distant peoples, what have they told them which could reasonably be accepted on their word and which did not demand the most exact verification? You proclaim to me a God born and dead two thousand years ago at the other end of the world in some little town, and you tell me that whoever has not believed in this mystery will be damned. These are very strange things to believe so quickly on the sole authority of a man whom I do not know! Why did your god make these events take place so far from me, if he wanted me to be under an obligation to be informed of them? Is it a crime not to know what takes place at the antipodes? Can I divine that there were a Hebrew people and a city of Jerusalem in another hemisphere? I might as well be obliged to know what is happening on the moon! You say that you come to teach this to me. But why did you not come to teach it to my father, or why do you damn this good old man for never having known anything about it? Ought he to be eternally punished for your laziness, he who was so good and beneficent, and who sought only the truth? Be of good faith; then put yourself in my place. See if I ought to believe on your testimony alone all the unbelievable things you tell me and to reconcile so many injustices with the just God whom you proclaim to me. I beg you, let me go and see this distant country where so many marvels take place that are unheard of in this one. Let me go and find out why the inhabitants of this Jerusalem treated God like a thief. They did not, you say, recognize him as god? What shall I do then, I who have never even heard Him mentioned except by you? You add that they were punished, dispersed, oppressed, enslaved, that none of them comes near that city anymore. Surely they well deserved all that. But what do today's inhabitants say of the deicide committed by their predecessors? They deny it; they, too, do not recognize God as God. The children of the others, then, might as well have been left there.

What! In the very city where God died, neither the old nor the new inhabitants acknowledged him, and you want me to acknowledge him, me who was born two thousand years after and two thousand leagues away? Do you not see that before I put faith in this book which you call sacred, and of which I understand nothing, I must be informed by people other than you when and by whom it was written, how it was preserved, how it was transmitted to you, what arguments are given by those in your country who reject it, although they know as well as you all that you teach me? You are well aware that I must necessarily go to Europe, Asia, and Palestine and examine everything for myself. I would have to be mad to listen to you prior to that time.

Not only does this discourse appear reasonable to me, but I maintain that every man in his senses ought to speak thus in a similar case and dismiss without more ado the missionary who is in a hurry to instruct and baptize him before verification of the proofs. Now, I maintain that there is no revelation against which the same objections do not have as much strength as, or more strength than, against Christianity. From this it follows that if there is only one true religion and every man is obliged to follow it under penalty of damnation, one's life must be spent in studying them all, in going deeper into them, in comparing them, in roaming around the country where each is established. No one is exempt from the first duty of man; no one has a right to rely on the judgment of others. The artisan who lives only by his work, the laborer who does not know how to read, the delicate and timid maiden, the invalid who can hardly leave his bed—all without exception must study, meditate, engage in disputation, travel, roam the world. There will no longer be any stable and settled people; the whole earth will be covered only with pilgrims going at great expense and with continuous hardships to verify, to compare, and to examine for themselves the various forms of worship that people observe. Then it will be goodbye to the trades, the arts, the humane sciences, and all the civil occupations. There can no longer be any other study than that of religion. He who has enjoyed the most robust health, best employed his time, best used his reason, and lived the most years will hardly know what to think in his old age; and it will be a great deal if he learns before his death in what worship he ought to have lived.

Do you want to modify this method and give the least hold to the authority of men? At that moment you surrender everything to it. And if the son of a Christian does well in following his father's religion without a profound and impartial examination, why would the son of a Turk do wrong in similarly following his father's religion? I defy all the intolerant people in the world to answer this question in a manner satisfactory to a sensible man.

Pressed by these arguments, some would prefer to make God unjust and to punish the innocent for their father's sin rather than to renounce their barbarous dogma. Others get out of it by obligingly sending an angel to instruct whoever, despite living in invincible ignorance, has lived morally. What a fine invention that angel is! Not content with subjecting us to their contrivances, they make it necessary for God Himself to use them.

You see, my son, to what absurdity pride and intolerance lead, when each man is so sure of his position and believes he is right to the exclusion of the rest of mankind. All my researches have been sincere—I take as my witness that God of peace Whom I adore and Whom I proclaim to you. But when I saw that these researches were and always would be unsuccessful, and that I was being swallowed up in an ocean without shores, I retraced my steps and restricted my faith to my primary notions. I have never been able to believe that God commanded me, under penalty of going to hell, to be so learned. I therefore closed all the books. There is one open to all eyes: it is the book of nature. It is from this great and sublime book that I learn to serve and

worship its divine Author. No one can be excused for not reading it, because it speaks to all men a language that is intelligible to all minds. Let us assume that I was born on a desert island, that I have not seen any man other than myself, that I have never learned what took place in olden times in some corner of the world; nonetheless, if I exercise my reason, if I cultivate it, if I make good use of my God-given faculties which require no intermediary, I would learn of myself to know Him, to love Him, to love His works, to want the good that He wants, and to fulfill all my duties on earth in order to please Him. What more will all the learning of men teach me?

If I were a better reasoner or better educated, perhaps I would sense the truth of revelation, its utility for those who are fortunate enough to acknowledge it. But if I see in its favor proofs I cannot combat, I also see against it objections I cannot resolve. There are so many solid reasons for and against that I do not know what to decide, and I neither accept nor reject it. I reject only the obligation to acknowledge it, because this alleged obligation is incompatible with God's justice and because, far from removing the obstacles to salvation, it would have multiplied them and made them insurmountable for the greater part of mankind. With this exception I remain in respectful doubt about this point. I am not so presumptuous as to believe myself infallible. Other men have been able to achieve certainty about what seems uncertain to me. I reason for myself and not for them. I neither blame them nor imitate them. Their judgment may be better than mine, but it is not my fault that it is not mine.

I also admit that the majesty of the Scriptures amazes me, and that the holiness of the Gospel speaks to my heart. Look at the books of the philosophers with all their pomp. How petty they are next to this one! Can it be that a book at the same time so sublime and so simple is the work of men? Can it be that he whose history it presents is only a man himself? Is his the tone of an enthusiast or an ambitious sectarian? What gentleness, what purity in his morals! What touching grace in his teachings! What elevation in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his speeches! What presence of mind, what finesse, and what exactness in his responses! What a dominion over his passions! Where is the man, where is the sage who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die without weakness and without ostentation? When Plato depicts his imaginary just man,* covered with all the opprobrium of crime and worthy of all the rewards of virtue, he depicts Jesus Christ feature for feature. The resemblance is so striking that all the Fathers have sensed it; it is impossible to be deceived about it. What prejudices, what blindness one must have to dare to compare the son of Sophroniscus to the son of Mary? What a distance from one to the other! Socrates, dying without pain and without ignominy, easily sticks to his character to the end; and if this easy death had not honored his life, one would doubt whether Socrates, for all his intelligence, were anything but a sophist. He invented morality, it is said. Others before him put it into practice; all he did was to say what they had done; all he did

* *De Rep*, Dial. 2.[58]

was to draw the lesson from their examples. Aristides was just before Socrates said what justice is. Leonidas died for his country before Socrates had made it a duty to love the fatherland. Sparta was sober before Socrates had praised sobriety. Before he had defined virtue, Greece abounded in virtuous men. But where did Jesus find among his own people that elevated and pure morality of which he alone gave the lessons and the example? * From the womb of the most furious fanaticism was heard the highest wisdom, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues lent honor to the vilest of all peoples. The death of Socrates, philosophizing tranquilly with his friends, is the sweetest one could desire; that of Jesus, expiring in torment, insulted, jeered at, cursed by a whole people, is the most horrible one could fear. Socrates, taking the poisoned cup, blesses the man who gives it to him and who is crying. Jesus, in the midst of a frightful torture, prays for his relentless executioners. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a wise man, the life and death of Jesus are those of a god. Shall we say that the story of the Gospel was wantonly contrived? My friend, it is not thus that one contrives; the facts about Socrates, which no one doubts, are less well attested than those about Jesus Christ. At bottom, this is to push back the difficulty without doing away with it. It would be more inconceivable that many men in agreement had fabricated this book than that a single one provided its subject. Never would Jewish authors have found either this tone or this morality; and the Gospel has characteristics of truth that are so great, so striking, so perfectly inimitable that its contriver would be more amazing than its hero. With all that, this same Gospel is full of unbelievable things, of things repugnant to reason and impossible for any sensible man to conceive or to accept! What is to be done amidst all these contradictions? One ought always to be modest and cirumspect, my child—to respect in silence what one can neither reject nor understand, and to humble oneself before the great Being who alone knows the truth.

This is the involuntary skepticism in which I have remained. But this skepticism is in no way painful for me, because it does not extend to the points essential to practice and because I am quite decided on the principles of all my duties. I serve God in the simplicity of my heart. I seek to know only what is important for my conduct. As for the dogmas which have an influence neither on actions nor on morality, and about which so many men torment themselves, I do not trouble myself about them at all. I regard all the particular religions as so many salutary institutions which prescribe in each country a uniform manner of honoring God by public worship. These religions can all have their justifications in the climate, the government, the genius of the people, or some other local cause which makes one preferable to another according to the time and place. I believe them all to be right as long as one serves God suitably. The essential worship is that of the heart. God does not reject its homage, if it is sincere, in whatever form it is offered to Him. I have been called—in the form of worship which I profess—to the service of the Church, and I perform with all possible exactness

* See in the Sermon on the Mount the parallel he himself draws between the morality of Moses and his own. *Matth.* C.5. 21 et seq.

the tasks prescribed to me. My conscience would reproach me for voluntarily failing to do so on any point. You know that after a long interdict I obtained, through M. de Mellarède's [59] influence, permission to resume my functions in order to help me to live. Formerly I said the Mass with the lightness with which one eventually treats the most serious things when one does them too often. But since adopting my new principles, I celebrate it with more veneration. I am filled with the majesty of the Supreme Being, with His presence, and with the insufficiency of the human mind, which has so little conception of what relates to its Author. Bearing in mind that I bring to Him the prayers of the people in a prescribed form, I carefully follow all the rites, I recite attentively, I take care never to omit either the least word or the least ceremony. When I approach the moment of the consecration, I collect myself so as to perform it in the frame of mind that the Church and the grandeur of the sacrament demand. I try to annihilate my reason before the supreme intelligence. I say to myself: "Who are you to measure infinite power?" I pronounce the sacramental words with respect, and I put into them all the faith within my power. Whatever may be the case in regard to this inconceivable mystery, I have no fear that I shall be punished on Judgment Day for having profaned it in my heart.

I have been honored with a sacred ministry, although in the lowest rank, and I shall never do or say anything to make myself unworthy of fulfilling its sublime duties. I shall always preach virtue to men; I shall always exhort them to do good; and insofar as I am able, I shall set them a good example. I shall not fail to make religion lovable to them; I shall not fail to strengthen their faith in the truly useful dogmas every man is obliged to believe. But God forbid that I ever preach the cruel dogma of intolerance to them, that I ever bring them to detest their neighbor, to say to other men, "You will be damned." * Were I in a more noticeable rank, this reservation could cause me trouble. But I am too unimportant to have much to fear, and I can hardly fall lower than I now am. Whatever happens, I shall never blaspheme divine justice and shall never lie about the Holy Spirit.

It has long been my ambition to have the honor of being a parish priest. I still have this ambition, but I no longer hope for its fulfillment. My good friend, I find nothing so fine as being a parish priest. A good parish priest is a minister of goodness, just as a good magistrate is a minister of justice. A parish priest never has to do harm. If he cannot always accomplish the good by himself, he is always in a fitting position to encourage it, and he often obtains it if he knows how to make himself respected. O if I could ever serve some poor parish of good people in our mountains, I would be happy, for it seems to me that I would be the cause of my parishioners' happiness. I would not make them rich, but I would share their poverty. I would remove from

* The duty to follow and love the religion of one's country does not extend to dogmas contrary to good morals, such as that of intolerance. It is this horrible dogma which arms men against one another and makes them all enemies of mankind. The distinction between civil tolerance and theological tolerance is puerile and vain. These two tolerances are inseparable, and one cannot be accepted without the other. Even angels would not live in peace with men they regarded as enemies of God.

them the stigma and the contempt they suffer, more unbearable than indigence. I would make them love concord and equality, which often banish poverty and always make it bearable. When they saw that I was in no way better off than they and nevertheless lived in contentment, they would learn how to be consoled for their fate and how to live in contentment like me. When instructing them, I would be less attached to the spirit of the Church than to the spirit of the Gospel, in which the dogma is simple and the morality sublime, and in which one sees few religious practices and many works of charity. Before teaching them what must be done, I would always make an effort to practice it, so that they would clearly see that I believe all that I say to them. If I had Protestants in my neighborhood or in my parish, I would not distinguish them at all from my true parishioners in everything connected with Christian charity. I would bring them all to love one another without distinction and to regard one another as brothers, to respect all religions, and to live in peace, with each observing his own. I think that to urge someone to leave the religion in which he was born is to urge him to do evil, and consequently is to do evil oneself. While waiting for greater enlightenment, let us protect public order. In every country let us respect the laws, let us not disturb the worship they prescribe; let us not lead the citizens to disobedience. For we do not know with certainty whether it is a good thing for them to abandon their opinions in exchange for others, and we are very certain that it is an evil thing to disobey the laws.

My young friend, I have just recited to you with my own mouth my profession of faith such as God reads it in my heart. You are the first to whom I have told it. You are perhaps the only one to whom I shall ever tell it. So long as there remains some sound belief among men, one must not disturb peaceful souls or alarm the faith of simple people with difficulties which they cannot resolve and which upset them without enlightening them. But once everything is shaken, one ought to preserve the trunk at the expense of the branches. Consciences which are agitated, uncertain, almost extinguished, and in the condition in which I have seen yours, need to be reinforced and awakened; and in order to put them back on the foundation of eternal truths, it is necessary to complete the job of ripping out the shaky pillars to which they think they are still attached.

You are at the critical age when the mind opens to certitude, when the heart receives its form and its character, and when one's whole life, whether for good or for bad, is determined. Later the substance is hardened, and new impressions no longer leave a mark. Young man, receive the stamp of truth on your still flexible soul. If I were more sure of myself, I would have taken a dogmatic and decisive tone with you. But I am a man; I am ignorant and subject to error. What could I do? I have opened my heart to you without reserve. What I hold to be sure, I have told to you as being sure. I have told you my doubts as doubts, my opinions as opinions. I have told you my reasons for doubting and for believing. Now it is for you to judge. You have taken your time. This caution is wise and makes me think well of you. Begin by putting your conscience in a condition where it wishes to be enlight-

ened. Be sincere with yourself. Make your own those of my sentiments which have persuaded you. Reject the rest. You are not yet depraved enough by vice to be in danger of choosing badly. I would suggest our conferring about it, but as soon as people engage in disputation, they get heated. Vanity and obstinacy get mixed up with it; good faith is no longer present. My friend, never engage in disputation, for one enlightens neither oneself nor others by it. As for me, it is only after many years of meditation that I have made my decision. I am sticking to it; my conscience is tranquil, my heart is contented. If I wanted to start over again with a new examination of my sentiments, I would not bring to it a purer love of the truth, and my mind, which has already become less active, would be less in a condition to know it. I shall stay as I am, lest the taste for contemplation gradually become an idle passion and make me lukewarm about the exercise of my duties, and lest I fall back into my former Pyrrhonism, without recovering the strength to get out of it. More than half of my life is past; I have left only the time I need for turning the rest of it to account and for effacing my errors by my virtues. If I am deceived, it is in spite of myself. He who reads in the depth of my heart well knows that I do not like my blindness. In my powerlessness to escape from it by my own lights, the only means that remains to me for getting out of it is a good life; and if God can bring forth children for Abraham from the very stones, every man has a right to hope for enlightenment when he makes himself worthy of it.

If my reflections lead you to think as I do, if my sentiments are also yours and we have the same profession of faith, here is the advice I give you. No longer expose your life to the temptations of poverty and despair; no longer spend it loitering ignominiously at the mercy of foreigners; and stop eating the vile bread of charity. Go back to your own country, return to the religion of your fathers, follow it in the sincerity of your heart, and never leave it again. It is very simple and very holy. I believe that of all the religions on earth it is the one which has the purest morality and which is most satisfactory to reason. As to the expenses of the trip, don't worry; they will be provided for. And do not fear the shame of a humiliating return. One ought to blush at making a mistake and not at correcting it. You are still at an age when everything can be pardoned, but when one no longer sins with impunity. If you wish to listen to your conscience, countless vain obstacles will disappear at its voice. You will sense that in the uncertainty in which we dwell, it is an inexcusable presumption to profess a religion other than that in which we were born, and a falseness not to practice sincerely the religion which we profess. For if we go astray, we deprive ourselves of a great excuse at the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge. Will He not pardon the error on which we were weaned sooner than the error we dared to choose ourselves?

My son, keep your soul in a condition where it always desires that there be a God, and you shall never doubt it. What is more, whatever decision you may make, bear in mind that the true duties of religion are independent of the institutions of men; that a just heart is the true temple of the divinity; that in every country and in every sect the sum

of the law is to love God above everything and one's neighbor as oneself; that no religion is exempt from the duties of morality; that nothing is truly essential other than these duties; that inner worship is the first of these duties; and that without faith no true virtue exists.

Flee those who sow dispiriting doctrines in men's hearts under the pretext of explaining nature. Their apparent skepticism is a hundred times more assertive and more dogmatic than the decided tone of their adversaries. Under the haughty pretext that they alone are enlightened, true, and of good faith, they imperiously subject us to their peremptory decisions and claim to give us as the true principles of things the unintelligible systems they have built in their imaginations. Moreover, by overturning, destroying, and trampling on all that men respect, they deprive the afflicted of the last consolation of their misery, and the powerful and the rich of the only brake on their passions. They tear out from the depths of our hearts remorse for crime and hope of virtue, and yet boast that they are the benefactors of mankind. They say that the truth is never harmful to men. I believe it as much as they do, and in my opinion this is a great proof that what they teach is not the truth.*

* The two parties attack each other reciprocally with so many sophisms that to want to deal with them all would be an immense and rash undertaking. It is already a lot to take note of some of them as they arise. One of the most familiar sophisms of the philosophist party is to contrast a supposed people of good philosophers with a people of bad Christians, as if a people of true philosophers were easier to make than a people of true Christians! I do not know whether one is easier to find than the other among individuals. But I do know that as soon as it is a question of peoples, it is necessary to suppose one which will abuse philosophy without religion, just as our peoples abuse religion without philosophy. And this seems to me to be a very different question.

Bayle has proved very well that fanaticism is more pernicious than atheism, and this is incontestable.[m] But what he did not take care to say, and which is no less true, is that fanaticism, although sanguinary and cruel, is nevertheless a grand and strong passion which elevates the heart of man, makes him despise death, and gives him a prodigious energy that need only be better directed to produce the most sublime virtues. On the other hand, irreligion—and the reasoning and philosophic spirit in general—causes attachment to life, makes souls effeminate and degraded, concentrates all the passions in the baseness of private interest, in the abjectness of the human *I*, and thus quietly saps the true foundations of every society. For what private interests have in common is so slight that it will never outweigh what sets them in opposition.

If atheism does not cause the spilling of men's blood, it is less from love of peace than from indifference to the good. Whatever may be going on is of little importance for the allegedly wise man, provided that he can remain at rest in his study. His principles do not cause men to be killed, but they prevent them from being born by destroying the morals which cause them to multiply, by detaching them from their species, by reducing all their affections to a secret egoism as deadly to population as to virtue. Philosophic indifference resembles the tranquility of the state under depotism. It is the tranquility of death. It is more destructive than war itself.

Thus fanaticism, although more deadly in its immediate effects than what is today called the philosophic spirit, is much less so in its consequences. Moreover, it is easy to put fair maxims on display in books; but the question is whether these maxims really are well connected with the doctrine, whether they flow from it necessarily; and that is what has not appeared clear up to now. It still remains to be known whether philosophy, if it were at its ease and on the throne, would have a good command over vainglory, interest, ambition, and the petty passions of man, and whether it would practice that gentle humanity it lauds to us in its writings.

From the point of view of principles, there is nothing that philosophy can do well that religion does not do still better, and religion does many things that philosophy could not do.

Practice is something else. But further examination is required. It is true that no man follows his religion, when he has one, in every point. It is also true that most

Good young man, be sincere and true without pride. Know how to be ignorant. You will deceive neither yourself nor others. If ever you have cultivated your talents and they put you in a position to speak to men, never speak to them except according to your conscience, without worrying whether they will applaud you. The abuse of learning produces incredulity. Every learned man disdains the common sentiment; each wants to have his own. Proud philosophy leads to freethinking as blind devoutness leads to fanaticism. Avoid these extremes. Always remain firm in the path of truth (or what in the simplicity of your heart appears to you to be the truth), without ever turning away from it out of vanity or weakness. Dare to acknowledge God among the philosophers; dare to preach humanity to the intolerant. You will perhaps be the only member of your party, but you will have within yourself a witness which will enable you to do without the witness of men. Whether they love you or hate you, whether they read or despise your writings, it does not matter: speak the truth; do the good. What does matter for man is to fulfill his duties on earth, and it is in forgetting oneself that one works for oneself. My child, private interest deceives us. It is only the hope of the just which never deceives.[63]

I have transcribed this writing not as a rule for the sentiments that one ought to follow in religious matters, but as an example of the way one can reason with one's pupil in order not to diverge from the method I have tried to establish. So long as one concedes nothing to the authority of men or to the prejudices of the country in which one was born, the light of reason alone cannot, in the education founded by nature, lead us any farther than natural religion. This is what I limit myself to with

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men hardly have one and do not follow at all the one they have. Still, some men do have one and follow it at least in part; and it is indubitable that religious motives often prevent them from doing harm and produce virtues and laudable actions which would not have occurred without these motives.

If a monk denies having received something with which he was entrusted, what follows, other than the fact that a fool confided it to him? If Pascal had denied having received such a deposit, that would prove that Pascal was a hypocrite and nothing more. But a monk! . . . Are the people who traffic in religion those who are religious? All the crimes committed among the clergy, as elsewhere, do not prove that religion is useless, but that very few people are religious.

Our modern governments incontestably owe their more solid authority and less frequent revolutions to Christianity. It has made these governments less sanguinary themselves. This is proved by actually comparing them to ancient governments. A better understanding of religion, by dispelling fanaticism, has given more gentleness to Christian morals. This change is not the work of literature, for wherever the latter has flourished humanity has not been any more respected. This is attested by the cruelties of the Athenians, the Roman emperors, and the Chinese. How many works of mercy are the result of the Gospel! Among the Catholics, how many restitutions, how many reparations are caused by the confession! Among us, how many reconciliations and deeds of charity are fostered by the approach of Communion time. How much less greedy usurers were made by the Jubilee of the Hebrews, and how many miseries it prevented![61] The brotherhood promoted by this law united the whole nation, and not a beggar was to be seen among them. Nor are any seen among the Turks, who have innumerable pious institutions. They are hospitable from religious principle, even toward the enemies of their worship.

> The Mohammedans say [according to Chardin] that after the examination which will follow the universal resurrection, all the bodies will pass over a bridge called Poul-Serrho which crosses over the eternal fire. This bridge, they say, can be called the third and last examination and the true final judgment,

my Emile. If he must have another religion, I no longer have the right to be his guide in that. It is up to him alone to choose it.

We work in collaboration with nature, and while it forms the physical man, we try to form the moral man. But we do not make the same progress. The body is already robust and strong while the soul is still languorous and weak, and no matter what human art does, temperament always precedes reason. Up to now we have given all our care to restraining the former and arousing the latter, in order that man may as much as possible always be one. In developing his nature, we have sidetracked its nascent sensibility; we have regulated it by cultivating reason. The intellectual objects moderated the impression of the objects of sense. In going back to the principle of things we have protected him from the empire of the senses. It was simple to rise from the study of nature to the quest for its Author.

When we have gotten there, what new holds we have given ourselves over our pupil. How many new means we have for speaking to his heart! It is only then that he finds his true interest in being good, in doing good far from the sight of men and without being forced by the laws, in being just between God and himself, in fulfilling his duty, even at the expense of his life, and in carrying virtue in his heart. He does this not only for the love of order, to which each of us always prefers love of self, but for the love of the Author of his being—a love which is confounded with that same love of self—and, finally, for the enjoyment of that durable happiness which the repose of a good conscience and the contemplation of this Supreme Being promise him in the other life after he has spent this one well. Abandon this, and I no longer see anything but injustice, hypocrisy, and lying among men. Private interest, which in case of conflict necessarily prevails over everything,

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because it is there that the separation of the good from the wicked will be made . . . etc.

The Persians [continues Chardin] are very much infatuated by this bridge, and when someone suffers an insult for which he cannot in any way or at any time get satisfaction, his final consolation is to say, "Very well, by the living God, you will pay double for it on the final day. You shall not pass over Poul-Serrho without having given me satisfaction beforehand. I shall hold on to the hem of your jacket and throw myself at your legs." I have seen many eminent men, belonging to all sorts of professions, who were apprehensive that someone would thus shout "Haro" at them when they crossed this formidable bridge, and entreated those who complained of them to pardon them. That happened to me a hundred times myself. Men of quality who had badgered me into acting otherwise than I would have wanted, approached me after they thought the irritation had passed and said to me, "I beg you, *halal becon antchisra,*" which means, "Make this affair lawful or just for me." Some have even given me gifts and rendered services to me in order that I pardon them and declare that I did so sincerely. The cause of this is nothing other than the belief that one will not cross the bridge of hell without having rendered the last penny to those one has oppressed. [vol. VII, p. 50] [62]

Should I believe that the idea of this bridge, which corrects so many iniquities, never prevents any? If one took this idea away from the Persians by persuading them that there is no Poul-Serrho or any place like it where the oppressed wreak vengeance on their tyrants after death, is it not clear that this would put the latter very much at their ease and would deliver them from the care of placating these unfortunates? It is false, therefore, that this doctrine would not be harmful. Therefore, this doctrine would not be the truth.

Philosopher, your moral laws are very fine, but I beg you to show me their sanction. Stop beating around the bush for a moment, and tell me plainly what you put in the place of Poul-Serrho.

teaches everyone to adorn vice with the mask of virtue. Let all other men do what is good for me at their expense; let everything be related to me alone; let all mankind, if need be, die in suffering and poverty to spare me a moment of pain or hunger. This is the inner language of every unbeliever who reasons. Yes, I shall maintain it all my life. Whoever speaks otherwise although he has said in his heart, "There is no God," is nothing but a liar or a fool.

Reader, I am well aware that no matter what I do, you and I will never see my Emile with the same features. You will always picture him as similar to your young people, always thoughtless, petulant, flighty, wandering from party to party, from entertainment to entertainment, never able to concentrate on anything. You will laugh when you see me make a contemplative, a philosopher, a veritable theologian out of an ardent, lively, intense, and impulsive young man at the most ebullient age of life. You will say, "This dreamer always pursues his chimera. In giving us a pupil of his making, he not only forms him, he creates him, he pulls him out of his brain; and though he believes he is always following nature, he diverges from it at every instant." I, comparing my pupil to yours, hardly find anything that they can have in common. Since they are reared so differently, it would almost be a miracle if Emile resembled yours in anything. Just as he spent his childhood in all the freedom they take as young men, he begins as a young man to take the discipline to which they were subjected as children. This discipline becomes a plague to them. They loathe it; they see in it only the long tyranny of their masters; they believe they leave childhood only in shaking off every kind of yoke; * they compensate themselves then for the long constraint in which they were kept, just as a prisoner freed from chains stretches, shakes, and flexes his limbs.

Emile, on the contrary, considers it an honor to make himself a man and to subject himself to the yoke of nascent reason. His body, already formed, no longer needs the same movements and by itself begins to quiet down, while his mind, half developed, seeks its turn to take flight. Thus, for the others the age of reason is only the age of license; for Emile it becomes the age of reasoning.

Do you want to know whether they or he is thereby closer to the order of nature? Consider the differences in those who are more or less distant from it. Observe young people in the country, and see if they are as petulant as are your young people. "During the childhood of savages," says Le Beau, "they are always active and involved in various games which stir the body; but almost as soon as they reach the age of adolescence, they become tranquil and dreamy, and they no longer engage in any games other than serious ones or games of chance." † Emile, who has been raised with all the freedom of young peasants and young savages, should change and quiet down as they do in growing up. The

* There is no one who sees childhood with so much contempt as those who are leaving it, just as there is no country where the distinction of ranks is preserved with more affectation than in those where inequality is not great and where everyone always fears being confounded with his inferior.

† Le Beau, *Aventures du Sieur Le Beau, avocat en Parlement.* Vol. II, p. 70.

whole difference is that instead of acting solely to play or to feed himself, he has learned to think in his labors and games. As he has reached this point by this road, he is all ready for the road on which I am now setting him. The subjects of reflection which I present to him inflame his curiosity because they are in themselves fair, because they are entirely new for him, and because he is in a condition to understand them. On the other hand, how could your young people, who are bored and exasperated by your insipid lessons, your long-winded moralizing, and your eternal catechisms, fail to refuse to apply their minds to what has been made a gloomy business for them—the heavy precepts with which they have constantly been burdened, and the meditations on the Author of their being, Who has been made the enemy of their pleasures? They have conceived only aversion, disgust, and distaste for all that; constraint has repelled them. What means is left to make them devoted to such things when they begin to decide for themselves? They have to have novelty to be pleased; they no longer can stand anything children are told. The same is the case with my pupil. When he becomes a man, I speak to him as to a man and tell him only new things. It is precisely because they bore the others that he ought to find them to his taste.

Consider how I gain time for him doubly by delaying the progress of nature to the advantage of reason. But have I actually delayed this progress? No, I have only prevented imagination from accelerating it. I have counterbalanced the premature lessons the young man receives elsewhere with lessons of another kind. While the torrent of our institutions carries him away, I attract him in the opposite direction by other institutions. This is not to remove him from his place but to keep him in it.

The true moment of nature comes at last. It must come. Since man must die, he must reproduce in order that the species may endure and the order of the world be preserved. When, by the signs of which I have spoken, you have a presentiment of the critical moment, instantly abandon your old tone with him forever. He is still your disciple, but he is no longer your pupil. He is your friend, he is a man. From now on treat him as such.

What! Must I abdicate my authority when it is most necessary to me? Must the adult be left to himself at the moment when he least knows how to conduct himself, and when he makes the greatest slips? Must I renounce my rights when it is most important for him that I make use of them? Your rights! Who is telling you to renounce them? It is only at present that they begin for him. Up to now you got nothing from him except by force or ruse. Authority and the law of duty were unknown to him. He had to be constrained or deceived to make him obey you. But see how many new chains you have put around his heart. Reason, friendship, gratitude, countless affections speak to him in a tone he cannot fail to recognize. Vice has not yet made him deaf to their voice. He is still sensitive only to the passions of nature. The first of all, which is self-love, puts him in your hands. Habit also puts him in your hands. If the transport of a moment tears him away from you, regret immediately brings him back. The sentiment attaching him to

you is the only permanent one; all the others pass and blot one another out. Do not let him be corrupted; he will always be docile. He will not begin to be rebellious until he is already depraved.

I readily admit that if you were to clash head on with his nascent desires and foolishly were to treat as crimes the new needs he is feeling, you would not be listened to for long. But as soon as you abandon my method, I no longer guarantee you anything. Always remember that you are the minister of nature, and you will never be its enemy.

But what course should be taken? Here the only choice is between encouraging his inclinations and fighting them, between being his tyrant and being his accomplice; and both alternatives have such dangerous consequences that hesitation about the decision is only too justified.

The first means that presents itself for resolving this difficulty is to marry him off very quickly. This is incontestably the surest and the most natural expedient. I doubt, however, that it is the best or the most useful. I shall tell my reasons later. In the meantime I agree that young people must be married when they reach the age at which they are nubile. But that age comes before its proper time for them; it is we who have induced its early arrival. It ought to be put off until maturity.

If one had only to listen to the inclinations and follow where they lead, the job would soon be done. But there are so many contradictions between the rights of nature and our social laws that one must constantly twist and turn in order to reconcile them. One must use a great deal of art to prevent social man from being totally artificial.

For the reasons previously presented I believe that by the means I have related and other similar ones the ignorance of the desires and the purity of the senses can be extended at least until the age of twenty. This is so true that among the Germans a young man who lost his virginity before that age suffered a permanent loss of reputation. With good reason, writers have attributed the vigorous constitutions of the Germans and the multitude of their children to the continence practiced by these peoples during their youth.

One can even greatly prolong this period of continence; only a few generations ago nothing was more common in France itself. Among other known examples, Montaigne's father, a man who was scrupulous and true as well as strong and well formed, swore that he was married a virgin at the age of thirty-three after long service in the wars of Italy; and one can see in the son's writings what vigor and what gaiety the father preserved when he was over sixty.[64] Certainly the contrary opinion is a result more of our morals and our prejudices than of knowledge of the species in general.

Therefore I can leave aside the example of our young. They prove nothing about those who were not raised like them. Given that nature has in this respect no fixed point that cannot be moved ahead or back, I believe that, without departing from nature's law, I can assume that through my efforts Emile has remained in his first innocence up to now. I see this happy period about to end. Surrounded by ever growing perils, he is going to get away from me no matter what I do. At the first

occasion—and this occasion will not be slow in arising—he is going to follow the blind instinct of the senses. The odds are a thousand to one that he is going to be ruined. I have reflected on men's morals too much not to see the invincible influence of this first moment on the rest of his life. If I dissimulate and pretend to see nothing, he takes advantage of my weakness. Believing he deceives me, he despises me, and I am the accomplice of his ruin. If I try to straighten him out, it is too late; he does not listen to me any more. I become inconvenient, odious, and unbearable to him. He will not delay in getting rid of me. Therefore I have only one reasonable course to take—to make him accountable to himself for his actions, to protect him at least from the surprises of error, and to show him openly the perils by which he is surrounded. Up to now I stopped him by his ignorance; now he has to be stopped by his enlightenment.

This new instruction is important, and it is advisable to go back and pick up the thread from a more general point of view. This is the moment to present my accounts to him, so to speak; to show him how his time and mine have been employed; to disclose to him what he is and what I am, what I have done, what he has done, what we owe each other, all his moral relations, all the commitments he has contracted, all those that have been contracted with him, what point he has reached in the progress of his faculties, how much of the road he still has to cover, the difficulties he will find there, the means of getting over these difficulties, what I can still help him with, what he alone must now help himself with, and finally, the critical point at which he stands, the new perils which surround him, and all the solid reasons which ought to oblige him to keep an attentive watch over himself before listening to his nascent desires.

Remember that to guide an adult it is necessary to take another tack than the one taken to guide a child. Do not hesitate to instruct him in these dangerous mysteries which you have so long hidden from him with so much care. Since he must finally know about them, it is important that he learn them neither from another nor from himself but from you alone. Since he is now forced to fight, he must know his enemy, so that he will not be taken by surprise.

Young people who are found to be knowledgeable about these matters and who are unaware how they came to this knowledge have never come to it with impunity. This indiscreet instruction, which can have no decent purpose, at the very least soils the imagination of those who receive it and disposes them to the vices of those who give it. This is not all. Domestics insinuate themselves in this way into a child's mind, gain his confidence, and make him regard his governor as a gloomy, boring fellow; one of the favorite subjects of their secret colloquies with the child is slandering his governor. When the child has reached this point, the master can withdraw; he can do no more good.

But why does the child choose special confidants? Always due to the tyranny of those who govern him. Why would he keep secrets from them, if he were not forced to do so? Why would he complain of them, if he had no subject of complaint? They are naturally his first con-

fidants. From the eagerness with which he comes to tell them what he thinks, it is clear that he believes he has only half thought it until he has told them. You can be sure that if the child fears neither a sermon nor a reprimand on your part, he will always tell you everything; you can also be sure that no one will dare to confide anything to him which he ought to keep secret from you when it is quite certain that there is nothing he will keep secret from you.

What gives me most confidence in my method is that, in following its effects as exactly as I can, I see no situation in the life of my pupil which does not leave me some agreeable image of him. At the very moment when he is carried away by the furies of temperament and, revolting against the hand which restrains him, he struggles and begins to escape me, I still find in his agitation, in his anger, his first simplicity. His heart, as pure as his body, is no more familiar with disguise than with vice. Neither reproaches nor contempt have made him a coward; never has vile fear taught him to disguise himself. He has all the indiscretion of innocence. He is uncalculatingly naïve. He does not yet know what use there is in deceit. Not a single movement takes place in his soul which his mouth or his eyes do not reveal, and often the sentiments he experiences are known to me sooner than to him.

As long as he continues freely to open his soul to me and to tell me with pleasure what he feels, I have nothing to fear. But if he becomes more timid and reserved, if I perceive in his conversation the first embarrassment of shame, instinct is already developing. There is no longer a moment to lose, and if I do not hurry to instruct him, he will soon be instructed in spite of me.

More than one reader, even among those who adopt my ideas, will think that what is needed here is only a conversation held at random, and the job will be done. Oh, that is not the way the human heart is governed! What one says means nothing if one has not prepared the moment for saying it. Before sowing, the earth must be plowed; the seed of virtue sprouts with difficulty, long preparation is required to make it take root. One of the things that makes preaching most useless is that it is done indiscriminately to everyone without distinction or selectivity. How can one think that the same sermon is suitable to so many auditors of such diverse dispositions, so different in mind, humor, age, sex, station, and opinion? There are perhaps not even two auditors for whom what one says to all can be suitable; and all our affections are so inconstant that there are perhaps not even two moments in the life of each man when the same speech would make the same impression on him. Judge whether the time for listening to grave lessons of wisdom is when the inflamed senses derange the understanding and tyrannize the will. Therefore, never talk reason to young people, even when they are at the age of reason, without first putting them in a condition to understand it. Most wasted speeches are wasted due to the fault of masters rather than of disciples. The pedant and the teacher say pretty much the same things, but the former says them on every occasion, while the latter says them only when he is sure of their effect.

As a somnambulist, wandering during his slumber, sleepwalks on the

brink of a precipice into which he would fall if he were suddenly awakened, so my Emile, in the slumber of ignorance, escapes perils that he does not perceive. If I awaken him with a start, he is lost. Let us first try to get him away from the precipice; and then we shall awaken him in order to show it to him from farther off.

Reading, solitude, idleness, the soft and sedentary life, and the society of women and young people are dangerous trails to blaze at his age, and they keep him constantly close to the peril. It is by means of other objects of sense that I put his senses off the track; it is by setting another course for his energies that I turn them away from the one they were beginning to take. It is by exercising his body with hard labor that I restrain the activity of imagination that is carrying him away. When the arms work hard, the imagination rests. When the body is tired out, the heart does not become inflamed. The promptest and easiest precaution is to tear him away from the locality of danger. First I take him out of the cities, far from objects capable of tempting him. But this is not enough. In what desert, in what wild abode will he escape the images pursuing him? Removing dangerous objects is nothing, if I do not also remove the memory of them, if I do not find the art of detaching him from everything, if I do not distract him from himself. Otherwise I might as well have left him where he was.

Emile knows a trade, but this trade is not our expedient here. He likes and understands agriculture, but agriculture does not suffice for us. The occupations he knows become a routine; when he devotes himself to them, it is as though he were doing nothing. He thinks about entirely different things; the head and the arms act separately. He must have a new occupation which interests him by its novelty, which keeps him on his toes, which pleases him, which requires application, which makes him exert himself, an occupation for which he has a passion and to which he gives himself completely. Now the only one which appears to me to unite all these qualities is hunting. If hunting is ever an innocent pleasure, if it is ever suitable to man, it is at present that one must have recourse to it. Emile has everything needed to succeed at it. He is robust, adroit, patient, indefatigable. He will infallibly get a taste for this exercise. He will give it all the ardor of his age. He will lose in it—at least for a time—the dangerous inclinations born of softness. The hunt hardens the heart as well as the body. It accustoms one to blood, to cruelty. Diana has been presented as the enemy of love, and the allegory is quite accurate. The languors of love are born only in sweet repose; violent exercise stifles the tender sentiments. In the woods, in rural places, the lover and the hunter are so differently affected that from the same objects they take away entirely different images. The cool shady spots, the groves, the sweet refuges of the former are for the latter only the grazing places of deer, the thickets in which game withdraw, their hiding places when pursued. Where the lover hears only nightingales and warbling, the hunter fancies horns and the yapping of dogs; the lover imagines only dryads and nymphs, the hunter only whippers-in, packs of hounds and horses. Take a walk in the country with these two kinds of men; from the

difference in their language you will soon recognize that the earth does not have a similar aspect for them, and the turn of their ideas is as different as the choice of their pleasures.

I understand how these tastes are joined, and how one finally finds time for everything. But the passions of youth are not to be divided in this way. Give it a single occupation which it loves, and all the rest will soon be forgotten. The variety of desires comes from the variety of kinds of knowledge, and the first pleasures a person knows are long the only ones he seeks. I do not want Emile's whole youth to be spent in killing animals, and I do not even pretend to justify in every respect this ferocious passion. It is enough for me that it serves to suspend a more dangerous passion, so that he will listen coolly to me when I speak of it and I will have the time to depict it without exciting it.

There are periods in human life which are made never to be forgotten. The period of the instruction about which I am speaking is such a time for Emile. It ought to influence the rest of his days. Let us try therefore to engrave it in his memory in such a way that it will never be effaced. One of the errors of our age is to use reason in too unadorned a form, as if men were all mind. In neglecting the language of signs that speak to the imagination, the most energetic of languages has been lost. The impression of the word is always weak, and one speaks to the heart far better through the eyes than through the ears. In wanting to turn everything over to reasoning, we have reduced our precepts to words; we have made no use of actions. Reason alone is not active. It sometimes restrains, it arouses rarely, and it has never done anything great. Always to reason is the mania of small minds. Strong souls have quite another language. It is with this language that one persuades and makes others act.

I observe that in the modern age men no longer have a hold on one another except by force or by self-interest; the ancients, by contrast, acted much more by persuasion and by the affections of the soul because they did not neglect the language of signs. All their covenants took place with solemnity in order to make them more inviolable. Before force was established, the gods were the magistrates of mankind. It was in their presence that individuals made their treaties and alliances and uttered their promises. The face of the earth was the book in which their archives were preserved. Stones, trees, heaps of rocks consecrated by these acts and thus made respectable to barbaric men, were the pages of this book, which was constantly open to all eyes. The well of the oath, the well of the living and seeing, the old oak of Mamre, the mound of the witness,[65] these were the crude but august monuments of the sanctity of contracts. None would have dared to attack these monuments with a sacrilegious hand, and the faith of men was more assured by the guarantee of these mute witnesses than it is today by all the vain rigor of the laws.

In regard to government, the august display of royal power impressed the subjects. Marks of dignity—a throne, a scepter, a purple robe, a crown, a diadem—were sacred things for them. These respected signs made the man who was thus adorned venerable to them. Without

soldiers, without threats, he was obeyed as soon as he spoke. Now that we make an affectation of abolishing these signs,* what happens as a result of this contempt? Royal majesty is effaced from all hearts, kings no longer make themselves obeyed except by dint of troops; the respect of subjects comes only from the fear of punishment. Kings no longer have the burden of wearing their diadem, and the nobility no longer have the insignia of their rank; but a hundred thousand arms must always be ready in order to get their orders executed. Although this perhaps seems finer to them, it is easy to see that in the long run this exchange will not turn out to have been profitable for them.

What the ancients accomplished with eloquence was prodigious. But that eloquence did not consist solely in fine, well-ordered speeches, and never did it have more effect than when the orator spoke least. What was said most vividly was expressed not by words but by signs. One did not say it, one showed it. The object that is exhibited to the eyes shakes the imagination, arouses curiosity, keeps the mind attentive to what is going to be said. Often this object alone has said everything. Thrasybulus and Tarquin cutting off the tops of the poppies,[67] Alexander placing his seal on his favorite's mouth,[68] Diogenes walking before Zeno [69]—did they not speak better than if they had made long speeches? What series of words would have rendered the same ideas so well? Darius, after he has entered Scythia with his army, receives from the king of the Scythians a bird, a frog, a mouse, and five arrows.[70] The ambassador leaves his present and departs without saying anything. In our days this man would have been regarded as crazy. This terrifying harangue made its point, and Darius hurried to get back to his country in whatever way he could. Substitute a letter for these signs. The more threatening it is, the less it will frighten. It will only be bluster at which Darius would only have laughed.

How great was the attention that the Romans paid to the language of signs! Different clothing according to ages and according to stations —togas, sagums, praetexts, bullas, laticlaves; [71] thrones, lictors, fasces, axes; crowns of gold or of herbs or of leaves; ovations, triumphs. Everything with them was display, show, ceremony, and everything made an impression on the hearts of the citizens. It was important to the state that the people assemble in this place rather than in that other one, that they saw or did not see the Capitol, that they were or were not turned in the direction of the Senate, that they deliberated on this or that day. Accused persons changed costume, and so did candidates; warriors did not vaunt their exploits, they showed their wounds. On the death of Caesar I imagine one of our orators wishing to move the people; he exhausts all the commonplaces of his art to present a pathetic description of Caesar's wounds, his blood, his corpse.

* The Roman clergy has very cleverly preserved them, and, following its example, so have some republics, among them that of Venice. Thus the Venetian government, in spite of the collapse of the state, still enjoys all the affection and adoration of the people thanks to the pomp of its antique majesty. Apart from the Pope adorned with his tiara, there can be neither king nor potentate nor man in the world so respected as the Doge of Venice—without power, without authority, but rendered sacred by his pomp and dressed up in a woman's hairdo under his ducal bonnet. The ceremony of the bucentaur, which makes so many fools laugh, would cause the population of Venice to shed all its blood for the maintenance of its tyrannical government.[66]

Antony, although eloquent, does not say all that. He has the body brought in.[72] What rhetoric!

But this digression, like many others, gradually carries me far from my subject, and my wanderings are too frequent to admit of being both long and tolerable. I therefore return to my subject.

Never reason in a dry manner with youth. Clothe reason in a body if you want to make youth able to grasp it. Make the language of the mind pass through the heart, so that it may make itself understood. I repeat, cold arguments can determine our opinions, but not our actions. They make us believe and not act. They demonstrate what must be thought, not what must be done. If that is true for all men, it is a fortiori true for young people, who are still enveloped in their senses and think only insofar as they imagine.

Therefore, even after the preparations of which I have spoken, I shall be very careful not to go all of a sudden to Emile's room and pompously make a long speech to him about the subject in which I want to instruct him. I shall begin by moving his imagination. I shall choose the time, the place, and the objects most favorable to the impression I want to make. I shall, so to speak, call all of nature as a witness to our conversations. I shall bring the Eternal Being, who is the Author of nature, to testify to the truth of my speech; I shall take Him as judge between Emile and me. I shall mark the place where we are—the rocks, the woods, and the mountains surrounding us shall be monuments of his promises and mine. I shall put in my eyes, my accent, and my gestures the enthusiasm and the ardor that I want to inspire in him. Then I shall speak to him, and he will listen to me. I shall be tender, and he will be moved. By concentrating upon the sanctity of my duties, I shall make his duties more respectable to him. I shall heighten the force of my reasoning with images and figurative language. My speeches will not be long and diffuse and filled with cold maxims but will be abundant with overflowing sentiments. My reasoning will be grave and sententious, but my heart will never have said enough. Then, in revealing to him all I have done for him, I shall reveal that I have done it for myself, and he will see in my tender affection the reason for all my care. What surprise, what agitation I am going to cause in him by suddenly changing language! Instead of narrowing his soul by always speaking of his interest, I shall now speak of mine alone, and I shall thereby touch him more. I shall inflame his young heart with all the sentiments of friendship, generosity, and gratitude which I have already aroused and which are so sweet to cultivate. I shall press him to my breast and shed tears of tenderness on him. I shall say to him, "You are my property, my child, my work. It is from your happiness that I expect my own. If you frustrate my hopes, you are robbing me of twenty years of my life, and you are causing the unhappiness of my old age." It is in this way that you get a young man to listen to you and that you engrave the memory of what you say to him in the depths of his heart.

Up to now I have tried to give examples of the way a governor ought to instruct his disciple in difficult situations. I have tried to do the same in this situation. But after many attempts I give up, convinced that the

French language is too precious to express in a book the naïveté of the first lessons on certain subjects.

The French language is said to be the chastest of languages. For my part, I believe it to be the most obscene. For it seems to me that the chasteness of a language consists not in the careful avoidance of indecent meanings but in not having them. In fact, to avoid them, one must think of them, and there is no language in which it is more difficult to speak purely, in every sense, than in French. The reader, always more clever at finding obscene meanings than the author is at keeping them out, is scandalized and shocked by everything. How could what passes through impure ears not be stained by them? A people with good morals, on the other hand, has appropriate terms for all things, and these terms are always decent because they are always used decently. It is impossible to imagine a language more modest than that of the Bible, precisely because there everything is said with naïveté. To render the same things immodest, it suffices to translate them into French. What I am going to say to my Emile will contain nothing that is not decent and chaste to his ear, but to find it such in reading it, one must have a heart as pure as his.

I even think that reflections on the true purity of speech and on the false delicacy of vice could have a useful place in the discussions about morality to which this subject leads us; for in learning the language of decency, Emile must also learn that of seemliness,[73] and it is quite necessary that he learn why these two languages are so different. However that may be, I maintain that if one waits, instead of hammering vain precepts into the ears of the young before the proper time—precepts which they then mock at the age when they would be opportune; if one prepares the moment for making oneself understood; if one then expounds the laws of nature in all their truth; if one shows him the sanction of these same laws in the physical and moral ills that their infraction brings down upon the guilty; if in speaking of this inconceivable mystery of generation, one joins to the idea of the allure given to this act by the Author of nature the idea of the exclusive attachment which makes it delicious, and the idea of the duties of fidelity and of modesty which surround it and redouble its charm in fulfilling its object; if, in depicting marriage to him not only as the sweetest of associations but as the most inviolable and holiest of all contracts, one tells him forcefully all the reasons which make so sacred a bond respectable to all men, and which bring hatred and maledictions to whoever dares to stain its purity; if one presents him with a striking and true picture of the horrors of debauchery, of its foolish degradation, of the gradual decline by which a first disorder leads to them all and finally drags to destruction whoever succumbs to it; if, I say, one shows him clearly how the taste for chastity is connected with health, strength, courage, the virtues, love itself, and all the true goods of man, I maintain that one will then render this chastity desirable and dear to him and that his mind will be amenable to the means he will be given for preserving it; for, so long as chastity is preserved, it is respected; it is despised only after having been lost.

It is not true that the inclination to evil is untamable, and that one

is not able to conquer it before having gotten the habit of succumbing to it. Aurelius Victor says that many men in the transports of love voluntarily bought a night with Cleopatra with their lives; and this sacrifice is not impossible for the drunkenness of passion.[74] But let us suppose that the most desperate man—the one least in command of his senses—sees the apparatus of torture and is sure of perishing on it in torments a quarter of an hour later. Not only would this man instantaneously become superior to temptations; it would even cost him little to resist them. The frightful image by which they would be accompanied would soon distract him from them; and, always rebuffed, these temptations would tire of returning. It is only our lukewarm will which causes all of our weakness, and we are always strong enough to do what we strongly wish. *Volenti nihil difficile.*[75] O if we detested vice as much as we love life, we would abstain from a pleasurable crime as easily as from a mortal poison in a delicious dish!

How do we fail to see that if all the lessons given to a young man on this point are without success, it is because they are without reasons suitable to his age, and because it is important at every age to clothe reason in forms which will make it loved. Speak to him gravely when necessary, but let what you say always have an attraction that forces him to listen to you. Do not combat his desires with dryness. Do not stifle his imagination; guide it lest it engender monsters. Speak to him of love, of women, of pleasures. Make him find a charm in your conversations which delights his young heart. Spare nothing to become his confidant. It is only by this title that you will truly be his master. Then no longer fear that your discussions will bore him; he will make you talk more than you want to.

If I have been able, in accordance with these maxims, to take all the necessary precautions and to make speeches to my Emile suitable for the juncture of life that he has reached, I do not doubt for an instant that he will come by himself to the point where I want to lead him, that he will eagerly put himself in my safekeeping, that he will be struck by the dangers with which he sees himself surrounded, and will say to me with all the warmth of his age, "O my friend, my protector, my master! Take back the authority you want to give up at the very moment that it is most important for me that you retain it. You had this authority up to this time only due to my weakness; now you shall have it due to my will, and it shall be all the more sacred to me. Defend me from all the enemies who besiege me, and especially from those whom I carry within myself and who betray me. Watch over your work in order that it remain worthy of you. I want to obey your laws; I want to do so always. This is my steadfast will. If ever I disobey you, it will be in spite of myself. Make me free by protecting me against those of my passions which do violence to me. Prevent me from being their slave; force me to be my own master and to obey not my senses but my reason."

When you have brought your pupil to this point (and if he does not get there, it will be your fault), be careful not to take him too quickly at his word lest, if ever your dominion appear too hard for him, he will believe he has a right to escape it by accusing you of having taken

him by surprise. It is at this moment that reserve and gravity have their place, and this tone will impress him so much the more because it will be the first time he will have seen you take it.

Therefore, you will say to him, "Young man, you make difficult commitments lightly. You would have to know what they mean in order to have the right to undertake them. You do not know the fury with which the senses, by the lure of pleasure, drag young men like you into the abyss of the vices. I know that you do not have an abject soul. You will never break faith, but how often you will repent having given it! How often you will curse the one who loves you when he finds himself forced to rend your heart in order to save you from the evils which threaten you! Just as Ulysses, moved by the Sirens' song and seduced by the lure of the pleasures, cried out to his crew to unchain him,[76] so you will want to break the bonds which hinder you. You will importune me with your complaints; you will reproach me for being a tyrant when I am most tenderly concerned with you. In thinking only of making you happy, I shall bring your hate down upon me. O my Emile, I can never bear the pain of being odious to you. Even your happiness is too dear at this price. Good young man, do you not see that in obliging yourself to obey me, you oblige me to guide you, to forget myself in order to devote myself to you, to listen neither to your complaints nor to your grumbling, to combat incessantly your desires and mine? You are imposing a harsher yoke on me than on yourself. Before burdening both of us with it, let us consult our strength. Take your time and give me mine for thinking about it; remember that he who is slowest to make a promise is always most faithful at keeping it."

You also should remember, masters, that the harder you make it to get your assent to the commitment, the easier you make its fulfillment. It is important that the young man be aware that he is promising much, and that you are promising yet more. When the moment has come, and he has, so to speak, signed the contract, then change your language. Make your dominion as gentle as you had indicated it would be severe. You will say to him, "My young friend, you lack experience, but I have fixed things so that you would not lack reason. You are in a position to see the motives of my conduct in all things. To do so, you have only to wait until you are calm. Always begin by obeying, and then ask me for an account of my orders. I shall be ready to give you a reason for them as soon as you are in a position to understand me, and I shall never be afraid of taking you as the judge between you and me. You promise to be docile, and I promise to make use of this docility only to make you the happiest of men. I give as a guarantee of my promise the fate that you have enjoyed up to now. Find anyone else of your age who has passed a life as sweet as yours, and I shall no longer promise you anything."

After establishing my authority, my first care will be to avoid the necessity of using it. I shall spare nothing to establish myself more and more in his confidence, to make myself more and more the confidant of his heart and the arbiter of his pleasures. Far from combating the inclinations of his age, I shall consult them in order to be their master. I shall join in his plans in order to direct them; I shall not seek

a distant happiness for him at the expense of the present. I want him to be happy not once but always, if it is possible.

Those who want to guide the young soberly, in order to preserve them from the traps of the senses, make love disgusting to them and would gladly make it a crime for them to think of it at their age, as though love were made for the old. All these deceitful lessons, to which the heart gives the lie, are not persuasive. The young man, guided by a surer instinct, secretly laughs at the gloomy maxims to which he feigns acquiescence, and all he waits for is the occasion to discard them. All this is contrary to nature. By following an opposite route, I shall more surely arrive at the same goal. I shall not be afraid to indulge him in the sweet sentiment for which he has such a thirst. I shall depict it to him as the supreme happiness of life, because in fact it is. In depicting it to him, I want him to yield to it. In making him sense how much charm the union of hearts adds to the attraction of the senses, I shall disgust him with libertinism, and I shall make him moderate by making him fall in love.

How limited one must be to see only an obstacle to the lessons of reason in the nascent desires of a young man! I see in them the true means of making him amenable to these very lessons. One has a hold on the passions only by means of the passions. It is by their empire that their tyranny must be combated; and it is always from nature itself that the proper instruments to regulate nature must be drawn.

Emile is not made to remain always solitary. As a member of society he ought to fulfill its duties. Since he is made to live with men, he ought to know them. He knows man in general; it remains for him to know individuals. He knows what is done in society; it remains for him to see how one lives in it. It is time to show him the exterior of this great stage, all of whose hidden mechanisms he already knows. He will bring to it no longer the stupid admiration of a giddy young man, but the discernment of a sound and exact mind. His passions will doubtless be able to lead him astray. When do they not lead astray those who yield to them? But at least he will not be deceived by the passions of others. If he sees them, it will be with the eyes of the wise man, and he will not be carried away by the example of others or seduced by their prejudices.

Just as there is a proper age for the study of the sciences, there is a proper age for getting a good grasp of social practices. Whoever learns these practices too young follows them throughout his whole life without selectivity, without reflection, and—despite his competence—without ever having clear knowledge of what he does. But he who learns these practices and sees the reasons for them follows them with more discernment and, consequently, with more exactness and grace. Give me a child of twelve who knows nothing at all; I should return him at fifteen to you as knowledgeable as the child you have instructed from the earliest age—but with the difference that your child's knowledge will be only in his memory, while mine's will be in his judgment. Similarly, introduce a young man of twenty into society; if he is well guided, in a year he will be more amiable and more judiciously polite than a young man who has been reared in society from childhood; for

the former, capable of sensing the reasons for all the forms of conduct related to a given age, station, and sex—which constitute social custom —can reduce them to principles and extend them to unforeseen cases; whereas the latter, having nothing but his routine as a guiding rule, is in trouble as soon as he departs from it.

Young French ladies are all raised in convents until they are married off. Does anyone perceive that they have any difficulty in adopting these manners which are so new to them? And will anyone accuse the women of Paris of having a gauche and awkward bearing or of being ignorant of the ways of society because they have not been sent into it from childhood? This prejudice comes from society people themselves, who know nothing more important than this little science and hence falsely imagine that one cannot begin learning it too soon.

It is true that one ought not to wait too long either. Whoever has spent his whole youth far from polite society brings to it for the rest of his life an awkward and constrained bearing, conversation that is always off key, and clumsy and maladroit manners which the habit of living in society can no longer undo and which are only made doubly ridiculous by an effort to improve them. Each sort of instruction has its proper time, which must be known, and its dangers, which must be avoided. It is above all in learning the ways of society that the dangers multiply, but I do not expose my pupil to them without precautions to protect him.

When my method deals satisfactorily with all aspects of a single problem and, in avoiding one difficulty, prevents another, then I judge that my method is good and that I am on the right path. This is what I believe I see in the expedient it suggests to me here. If I wish to be austere and dry with my pupil, I shall lose his confidence, and soon he will hide himself from me. If I wish to be agreeable and pliant or to close my eyes, what is the use of his being under my protection? I only authorize his disorder and relieve his conscience at the expense of mine. If I introduce him to society with the sole aim of instructing him, he will instruct himself more than I want. If I keep him away from society to the end, what will he have learned from me? Everything perhaps, except the most necessary art for a man and a citizen, which is knowing how to live with his fellows. If I attribute to his efforts a utility which is too far off, it will be as nothing for him. He cares only about the present. If I am satisfied with providing entertainment for him, what good am I doing him? He becomes enervated and gets no instruction.

None of that for Emile. My expedient by itself provides for everything. "Your heart," I say to the young man, "needs a companion. Let us go seek her who suits you. We shall not easily find her perhaps. True merit is always rare. But let us neither be in a hurry nor become disheartened. Doubtless there is such a woman and in the end we shall find her, or at least the one who is most like her." With a project that is so appealing to him, I introduce him into society. What need have I to say more? Do you not see that I have done everything?

Imagine whether I shall know how to get his ear when I depict the beloved whom I destine for him. Imagine whether I shall know how to

make agreeable and dear to him the qualities he ought to love, whether I shall know how to make all his sentiments properly disposed with respect to what he ought to seek or to flee? I would have to be the clumsiest of men not to be able to make him passionate in advance of his knowing about whom. It is unimportant whether the object I depict for him is imaginary; it suffices that it make him disgusted with those that could tempt him; it suffices that he everywhere find comparisons which make him prefer his chimera to the real objects that strike his eye. And what is true love itself if it is not chimera, lie, and illusion? We love the image we make for ourselves far more than we love the object to which we apply it. If we saw what we love exactly as it is, there would be no more love on earth. When we stop loving, the person we loved remains the same as before, but we no longer see her in the same way. The magic veil drops, and love disappears. But, by providing the imaginary object, I am the master of comparisons, and I easily prevent my young man from having illusions about real objects.

For all that, I do not want to deceive a young man by depicting for him a model of perfection which cannot exist. But I shall choose such defects in his beloved as to suit him, as to please him, and to serve to correct his own. Nor do I want to lie to him by falsely affirming that the object depicted for him exists. But if he takes pleasure in the image, he will soon hope that it has an original. From the hope to the supposition, the path is easy; it is a matter of some skillful descriptions which clothe this imaginary object with features he can grasp with his senses and give it a greater air of truth. I would go so far as to give her a name. I would say, laughing, "Let us call your future beloved Sophie. The name Sophie augurs well. If the girl whom you choose does not bear it, she will at least be worthy of bearing it. We can do her the honor in advance." If, after giving all these details, you neither affirm nor deny her existence but slip out of it by evasions, his suspicions will turn into certainty. He will believe that you are keeping a secret about the spouse who is intended for him and that he will see her when the time has come. Once he is at that point, and if you have chosen well the features he should be showed, all the rest is easy. He can be exposed to society almost without risk. Defend him only against his senses; his heart is safe.

But whether or not he believes the model I have succeeded in making lovable to him is a real person, this model, if well made, will nonetheless attach him to everything resembling it and will estrange him from everything not resembling it, just as if his passion had a real object. What an advantage this is for preserving his heart from the dangers to which his person must be exposed; for repressing his senses by his imagination; and especially for tearing him away from those ladies who give an education that is purchased so dearly and who teach a young man good manners only by taking all decency from him! Sophie is so modest! How will he view their advances? Sophie has so much simplicity! How will he like their airs? Too great a distance separates his ideas from his observations for the latter ever to be dangerous to him.

All those who speak of the governance of children adhere to the same prejudices and the same maxims, because they observe badly and re-

flect still worse. It is due to neither temperament nor the senses that the wildness of youth begins; it is due to opinion. If boys raised in colleges and girls raised in convents were at issue here, I would make it plain that this is true even with respect to them; for the first lessons that both get—the only ones which bear fruit—are those of vice; and it is not nature which corrupts them, it is example. But let us abandon the students living in colleges and convents to their bad morals, which will always be irremediable. I am speaking here only of domestic education. Take a young man soberly raised in his father's home in the country, and examine him at the moment he arrives in Paris or enters society. You will find that he is right-thinking about decent things and even that his will is as healthy as his reason. You will find in him contempt for vice and horror of debauchery. At the very mention of a prostitute you will see scandalized innocence in his eyes. I maintain that there is not one such young man who can resolve to enter by himself the gloomy abodes of these unfortunate women, even if he were to know their use and to feel the need of them.

Consider the same young man again six months later. You will no longer recognize him. The easy talk, the fashionable maxims, the jaunty bearing would cause him to be taken for a different man, if his jokes about his former simplicity, and his shame when it is recalled to him, did not show that he is the same man and that this fact makes him blush. O how much he has been educated in so short a time! Whence comes so great and so sudden a change? From the progress of temperament? Would his temperament not have made the same progress in his paternal home? And there, surely, he would have acquired neither this style nor these maxims. From the first pleasures of the senses? On the contrary. When one begins to yield to these pleasures, one is fearful and uneasy; one flees broad daylight and gossip. The first delights are always mysterious. Modesty seasons them and hides them. His first mistress makes a man not brazen but timid. Totally absorbed in a condition so new for him, the young man withdraws into himself to enjoy it and constantly dreads losing it. If he is loud, he is neither voluptuous nor tender. So long as he boasts, he has not enjoyed.

New ways of thinking have by themselves produced these differences. His heart is still the same, but his opinions have changed. His sentiments, slower to alter, will eventually be spoiled by these opinions, and it is only then that he will be truly corrupted. He has hardly entered society when he receives there a second education completely opposed to his first, an education from which he learns to despise what he esteemed and to esteem what he despised. He is made to regard the lessons of his parents and his masters as a pedantic jargon and the duties they have preached to him as a puerile morality that ought to be disdained when one has grown up. He believes himself honor-bound to change his conduct. He becomes a seducer without desires and a fop out of fear of ridicule. He mocks good morals before having gotten the taste for bad ones and prides himself on debauchery without knowing how to be debauched. I shall never forget the admission of a young officer in the Swiss Guards who was greatly bored by the brazen pleasures of his comrades but did not dare to abstain for fear of being

ridiculed. "I am getting practice at that," he said, "as I am at taking tobacco in spite of my repugnance. The taste will come from habit. One must not remain a child forever."

Thus, a young man entering society must be preserved less from sensuality than from vanity. He yields more to the inclinations of others than to his own, and *amour-propre* produces more libertines than love does.

Therefore I ask whether there is a young man on the entire earth who is better armed than Emile against everything that can attack his morals, his sentiments, or his principles? Whether there is one better prepared to resist the torrent? For against what seduction is he not on guard? If his desires lead him to women, he does not find what he is looking for, and his preoccupied heart holds him back. If his senses agitate and impel him, where will he find the means of satisfying them? His horror of adultery and debauchery keeps him away from both prostitutes and married women, and it is always with one of these two classes of women that the disorders of youth begin. A marriageable girl may be coquettish, but she will not be brazen; she will not throw herself at a young man who might marry her if he believes her to be chaste. Besides, she will have someone looking after her. Nor will Emile be left completely to himself. Both will at least be guarded by fear and shame, which are inseparable from our first desires. They will not immediately proceed to extreme familiarities, and they will not have the time to get to them by degrees without hindrance. To go about it otherwise, Emile would have to have already taken lessons from his comrades, to have learned from them to regard his restraint as ridiculous, and to have become insolent in imitation of them. But who in the world is less of an imitator than Emile? Who is less governed by ridicule than the man who has no prejudices and does not know how to concede anything to those of others? I have worked for twenty years to arm Emile against mockers. They will need more than a day to make him their dupe; for in his eyes ridicule is only the argument of fools, and nothing makes one more insensitive to mockery than being above opinion. Instead of jokes, he has to have reasons; and so long as that is the case, I am not afraid that wild young men are going to take him from me. I have conscience and truth on my side. If prejudice has to be mixed in, an attachment of twenty years is also something. Emile will never be made to believe that I bored him with vain lessons; and in an honest and sensitive heart, the voice of a faithful and true friend can surely drown out the cries of twenty seducers. Since it then becomes only a question of showing him that they deceive him and that, in feigning to treat him as a man, they really treat him as a child, I shall always use arguments that are simple but grave and clear, so that he will sense that it is I who treat him like a man. I shall say to him, "You see that your interest alone, which is also mine, dictates my speeches; I can have no other interest. But why do these young people want to persuade you? It is because they want to seduce you. They do not love you. They take no interest in you. Their whole motive is a secret spite at seeing that you are better than they are. They want to bring you down to their low level, and they reproach you for letting

yourself be governed only in order to govern you themselves. Can you believe that there would be any profit for you in this change? Is their wisdom, then, so superior, and is their brief attachment to you stronger than mine? To give some weight to their ridicule, one would have to be able to give some weight to their authority; but what experience do they have that would make their maxims superior to ours? All they have done is to imitate other giddy fellows, just as they want to be imitated in their turn. To set themselves above the alleged prejudices of their fathers, they enslave themselves to those of their comrades. I do not see what they gain by that, but I do see that they surely lose two great advantages: paternal affection, which provides tender and sincere advice; and experience, which allows one to judge what one knows; for fathers have been children, and children have not been fathers.

"But do you believe that they are at least sincere in their rash maxims? Not even that, dear Emile. They deceive themselves in order to deceive you. They are not in harmony with themselves. Their hearts constantly give them the lie, and their mouths often contradict them. One man derides everything decent but would be in despair if his wife thought as he does. Another will extend his indifference about morals to those of the wife he does not yet have or—the crown of infamy—to those of the wife he already has. But go farther; speak to him of his mother, and see if he will gladly be looked upon as a child of adultery and the son of a woman of easy virtue, as one who has wrongfully assumed a family name, as a thief of the natural heir's patrimony; finally, see if he will patiently allow himself to be called a bastard! Who among them will want to have his own daughter dishonored as he dishonors the daughter of another? There is not one of them who would not make an attempt upon your very life if in practice you adopted toward him all the principles he makes an effort to teach you. It is thus that they finally disclose their inconsistency and that one senses that none of them believes what he says. These are my arguments, dear Emile. Weigh them against theirs, if they have any, and compare them. If I wanted to use contempt and ridicule as they do, you would see that they leave themselves open to ridicule as much as and perhaps more than I do. But I am not afraid of a serious examination. The triumph of mockers does not last long. Truth remains, and their foolish laughter vanishes."

You cannot image how Emile can be docile at twenty? How differently we think! I cannot conceive how he could have been docile at ten, for what hold did I have on him at that age? It has taken fifteen years of care to contrive this hold for myself. I did not educate him then; I prepared him to be educated. He is now sufficiently prepared to be docile. He recognizes the voice of friendship, and he knows how to obey reason. It is true that I leave him the appearance of independence, but he was never better subjected to me; for now he is subjected because he wants to be. As long as I was unable to make myself master of his will, I remained master of his person; I was never a step away from him. Now I sometimes leave him to himself, because I govern him always. In leaving him, I embrace him, and I say to him

in a confident manner, "Emile, I entrust you to my friend; I deliver you to his decent heart. It will answer to me for you!"

It is not the business of a moment to corrupt healthy affections that have suffered no previous impairment and to blot out principles immediately derived from the first lights of reason. If some change takes place during my absence, that absence will never be long enough, and he will never know how to hide himself from me well enough for me not to perceive the danger before the disease and not be in time to remedy it. Just as one does not suddenly become depraved, one does not suddenly learn to dissimulate; and if ever a man was maladroit at this art, it is Emile, who has not had a single occasion to use it in his life.

By these measures and other similar ones I believe he will be so well protected against external objects and vulgar maxims that I would rather see him in the midst of the worst society of Paris than alone in his room or in a park, given over to all the restlessness of his age. No matter what one does, the most dangerous of all the enemies that can attack a young man, and the only one that cannot be put out of the way, is himself. This enemy, however, is dangerous only through our own fault; for as I have said countless times, the senses are awakened by the imagination alone. Their need is not properly a physical need. It is not true that it is a true need. If no lewd object had ever struck our eyes, if no indecent idea had ever entered our minds, perhaps this alleged need would never have made itself felt to us, and we would have remained chaste without temptation, without effort, and without merit. We do not know what mute fermentation certain situations and certain spectacles arouse in the blood of the young without their being able to discern for themselves the cause of this first disturbance, a disturbance not easily calmed nor slow to recur. As for me, the more I reflect on this important crisis and its near or distant causes, the more I am persuaded that a solitary man raised in a desert, without books, without instruction, and without women, would die there a virgin at whatever age he had reached.

But we are not talking here about a savage of this kind. In raising a man among his fellows for a life in society, it is impossible, it is even counter to my intention, to keep him always in this salutary ignorance; and the worst situation for chastity is to be halfway knowledgeable. The memory of objects that have made an impression upon us, the ideas that we have acquired follow us in our retreat and people it in spite of ourselves with images more seductive than the objects themselves; they make solitude as fatal to the man who carries these images to his retreat as it is useful to the man who has always remained there alone.

Therefore watch the young man carefully. He can protect himself from everything else, but it is up to you to protect him from himself. Do not leave him alone, day or night. At the very least, sleep in his room.[77] Distrust instinct as soon as you no longer limit yourself to it. It is good as long as it acts by itself; it is suspect from the moment it operates within man-made institutions. It must not be destroyed, but

it must be regulated, and that is perhaps more difficult than annihilating it. It would be very dangerous if instinct taught your pupil to trick his senses and to find a substitute for the opportunity of satisfying them. Once he knows this dangerous supplement, he is lost. From then on he will always have an enervated body and heart. He will suffer until his death the sad effects of this habit, the most fatal to which a man can be subjected. Surely, rather than that . . . If the furies of an ardent temperament become invincible, my dear Emile, I pity you; but I shall not hesitate for a moment, I shall not allow nature's goal to be eluded. If a tyrant must subjugate you, I prefer to yield you to one from whom I can deliver you. Whatever happens, I shall tear you away more easily from women than from yourself.

The body grows until the age of twenty, and it needs all its substance. Continence then is in accordance with the order of nature, and one can scarcely deviate from it except at the expense of one's constitution. After the age of twenty continence is a duty of morality; it is important to learn to rule oneself, to remain the master of one's appetites. But moral duties have their modifications, their exceptions, their rules. When human weakness makes a choice inevitable, let us prefer the lesser of two evils. In any event, it is better to commit an offense than to contract a vice.

Remember that I am no longer speaking of my pupil here, but of yours. Do his passions, which you have allowed to ferment, subjugate you? Then yield to them openly, without disguising his victory from him. If you know how to reveal his victory to him in its true light, he will be less proud than ashamed of it, and you will keep the right of guiding him when he strays, so that you can at least make him avoid the precipices. It is important that the pupil not do anything that the master does not know about and does not want him to do—even if it is evil; and it is a hundred times better that the governor approve an offense and deceive himself than that he be deceived by his pupil and that the offense take place without his knowing anything about it. He who believes he ought to close his eyes to something soon finds himself forced to close them to everything; the first abuse that is tolerated leads to another, and this chain ends only with the overturning of all order and contempt for all law.

Another error which I have already combated, but which small minds will never abandon, is that of always affecting magisterial dignity and wanting to pass for a perfect man in the mind of one's disciple. This method is misconceived. How can such masters fail to see that in wanting to strengthen their authority, they destroy it; to make yourself heard, you must put yourself in the place of those you are addressing, and you must be a man in order to know how to speak to the human heart? All those perfect people are neither touching nor persuasive. One always tells oneself that it is quite easy for them to combat passions they do not feel. Show your weaknesses to your pupil if you want to cure his own. Let him see that you undergo the same struggles which he experiences. Let him learn to conquer himself by your example. And do not let him say as other pupils do: "These old men are spiteful because they are no longer young; they want to treat young

people like old men; and because all their desires are extinguished, they treat ours as a crime."

Montaigne says that one day he asked Seigneur de Langey how many times during his negotiations with Germany he had gotten drunk in the king's service.[78] I would gladly ask the governor of some young man how often he went to a house of ill fame in his pupil's service. How many times? I am mistaken. If the first time does not forever destroy the pupil's desire to return, if he does not bring away repentance and shame, if he does not shed torrents of tears on your bosom, abandon him immediately. He is nothing but a monster, or you are nothing but an imbecile. You will never be of any use to him. But let us pass over these extreme expedients which are as sad as they are dangerous and have no relation to our education.

How many precautions must be taken with a well-born young man before exposing him to the scandalous morals of our age! These precautions are difficult, but they are indispensable. It is negligence on this point which dooms all our young people; it is due to the disorder of their early life that men degenerate and that one sees them become what they are today. Vile and cowardly even in their vices, they have only small souls because their worn-out bodies were corrupted early. There hardly remains enough life in them to move. Their subtle thoughts are signs of minds without substance. They do not know how to feel anything great and noble; they have neither simplicity nor vigor. Abject in all things and basely wicked, they are only vain, rascally, and false; they do not even have enough courage to be illustrious criminals. Such are the contemptible men who form the scum of our youth. If there were a single man among them who knew how to be temperate and sober and who knew how in their midst to preserve his heart, his blood, and his morals from the contagion of their example, at the age of thirty he would crush all these insects and become their master with less effort than he had exerted in remaining his own master!

No matter how little birth and fortune had done for Emile, he would be that man if he wanted to be. But he would despise these young men too much to deign to enslave them. Let us see him now in their midst, entering society not in order to excel in it, but to know it and to find there a companion worthy of him.

In whatever rank he may have been born, into whatever society he begins to enter, his debut will be simple and without brilliance. God forbid that he be unfortunate enough to shine. The qualities which strike people at first glance are not his. He neither has them nor wants to have them. He values men's judgments too little to value their prejudices, and he does not care to be esteemed before being known. His way of presenting himself is neither modest nor vain; it is natural and true. He knows neither embarrassment nor disguise, and in the midst of a group he is the same as he is when he is alone and without any witnesses. Will he therefore be coarse, disdainful, heedless of everyone? On the contrary. When he is alone, he does not think that other men count for nothing. Why would he think that they count for nothing when he lives among them? He does not prefer other men to himself in his manners because he does not prefer them to himself in his heart.

But neither does he display to them an indifference which he is very far from having. If he does not use polite formulas, he does have humane concerns. He does not like to see anyone suffer. He will not offer his place to someone else out of affectation, but he will gladly yield it out of goodness if he sees that someone else is forgotten and judges that the man is mortified by this neglect. For it will cost my young man less to remain standing voluntarily than to see the other person forced to remain standing.

Although in general Emile does not esteem men, he will not show contempt for them, because he pities them and is touched by them. Unable to give them the taste for things that are really good, he leaves them with the things that are good according to popular opinion, with which they are contented. Otherwise, by taking these things from them to no avail, he will make them unhappier than before. Therefore, he is not disputatious or contradictory; neither is he accommodating and flattering. He gives his opinion without combating anyone else's, because he loves freedom above everything and frankness is one of the finest of rights.

He speaks little because he hardly cares whether any attention is paid to him. For the same reason he says only useful things; otherwise, who would engage him in conversation? Emile is too well informed ever to be talkative. Babbling inevitably comes either from pretentions to cleverness—about which I shall speak hereafter—or from the value we give to bagatelles which we foolishly believe others care about as much as we do. He who knows enough about things to assign them all their true value never speaks too much, for he also knows how to evaluate the attention paid to him and the interest that can be taken in his conversation. Generally people who know little speak a great deal, and people who know a great deal speak little. It is easy for an ignoramus to find everything he knows important and to tell it to everyone. But a well-informed man does not easily open up his repertoire. He would have too much to say, and he sees yet more to be said after he has spoken. He keeps quiet.

Far from shocking others, Emile is quite willing to conform to their ways—not to appear knowledgeable about social practice or to affect the airs of an elegant man; but, on the contrary, he does so for fear of being singled out, in order to avoid being noticed. And he is never more at ease than when no attention is paid to him.

Although he is absolutely ignorant of the ways of the world when he enters it, this does not make him timid and fearful. If he conceals himself, it is not due to embarrassment; it is because in order to see well one must not be seen. What people think of him hardly bothers him, and ridicule does not frighten him in the least. The result is that he is always serene and cool and never troubled by shame. Whether he is observed or not, he always does his best; and since he is always entirely self-possessed in order to observe others well, he grasps their practices with a facility that the slaves of opinion cannot match. It may be said that he more readily adopts the practices of society precisely because he cares so little about them.

Do not deceive yourself about his comportment, however, and do not

try to compare it to that of your young charmers. He is firm and not conceited. His manners are free and not disdainful. An insolent air belongs only to slaves; independence has nothing affected about it. I have never seen a man who has pride in his soul display it in his bearing. This affectation is far more fitting for vile and vain souls who can make an impression only in that way. I read in a book that when a foreigner presented himself one day at the studio of the famous Marcel,[79] the latter asked him what country he came from. "I am English," responded the foreigner. "You, English?" replied the dancer. "You are from that island where the citizens take part in public administration and have a portion of the sovereign power? * No, sir, this hanging head, this timid glance, this uncertain bearing proclaim to me only the titled slave of a German Elector."

I do not know whether this judgment reveals a great knowledge of the true relation which exists between a man's character and his exterior. As for me, since I do not have the honor of being a dancing master, I would have thought exactly the opposite. I would have said, "This Englishman is not a courtier. I have never heard it said that courtiers have hanging heads or an uncertain bearing. A man who is timid at a dancer's studio might very well not be timid in the House of Commons." Certainly, this M. Marcel must take his compatriots for nothing but Romans.

When one loves, one wants to be loved. Emile loves men; therefore he wants to please them. A fortiori, he wants to please women. His age, his morals, and his project all unite to foster this desire. I say his morals, for they have a great deal to do with it. Men who have morals are the true worshipers of women. They do not have that mocking jargon of gallantry as the others do, but they have a truer and more tender eagerness which comes from the heart. In the presence of a young woman, I could pick out a man who has morals and is in command of his nature from a hundred thousand debauchés. Judge what Emile must be like, with a wholly fresh temperament and so many reasons for resisting it! I believe he will sometimes be timid and embarrassed in the company of women. But surely this will not be displeasing to them, and even the least roguish women will only too often possess the art of taking advantage of his embarrassment and increasing it. Moreover, his eagerness will noticeably change its form according to a woman's status. He will be more modest and more respectful toward married women, and livelier and more tender with marriageable girls. He does not lose sight of the object of his search, and he always pays the most attention to what reminds him of that search.

No one will be more exact than Emile in observing all the signs of respect that are founded on the order of nature and even on the good order of society; but he will always prefer the former to the latter, and

* As if there were citizens who were not members of the city, and who did not as such have a part of the sovereign authority! But the French, having judged it suitable to usurp the respectable name of citizens—a name formerly merited by the members of the Gallic cities—have denatured the idea of citizenship to the point where one no longer has any conception of it. A man who just wrote me a pack of stupidities against *La Nouvelle Héloïse* adorned his signature with the title "Citizen of Paimboeuf" and believed he had made an excellent joke at my expense.[80]

he will respect a private man older than himself more than a magistrate of his own age. Since he will ordinarily be one of the youngest members of the society in which he finds himself, he will always be one of the most modest—not out of a desire to appear humble founded upon vanity, but out of a sentiment that is both natural and founded on reason. He will not have the impertinent *savoir-vivre* of a young fop who, in order to amuse the company, speaks louder than the wise and interrupts the old. He will not justify the response given to Louis XV by an old gentleman who was asked by the king whether he preferred his own time or the present: "Sire, I spent my youth respecting the old, and I have to spend my old age respecting children."

Emile possesses a tender and sensitive soul, but he values nothing according to the price set by opinion; thus, although he likes to please others, he will care little about being esteemed by them. From this it follows that he will be more affectionate than polite, that he will never put on airs or make a display, and that he will be more touched by a caress than by a thousand praises. For the same reasons he will neglect neither his manners nor his bearing. He may even take some care with his dress, not in order to appear to be a man of taste but to make his looks more agreeable. He will not resort to the gilded frame, and his clothing will never be stained by the mark of riches.

It can be seen that all this does not require a display of precepts from me and is only an effect of his first education. The practices of society are made out to be a great mystery, as though at the age when these practices are acquired one did not take to them naturally and as though their first laws were not to be found in a decent heart! True politeness consists in showing benevolence to men. It reveals itself without difficulty when one possesses it. It is only for the man who does not possess true politeness that one is forced to make an art of its outward forms.

> The most unfortunate effect of formal politeness is to teach the art of getting along without the virtues it imitates. Let humanity and beneficence be inspired in us by education, and we shall have politeness, or we shall no longer need it.
>
> If we do not possess the politeness heralded by the graces, we shall have that politeness which heralds the decent man and the citizen; we shall not need to resort to falseness.
>
> Instead of being artificial in order to please, it will suffice to be good. Instead of being false in order to flatter the weaknesses of others, it will suffice to be indulgent.
>
> Those whom one treats in such a way will neither have their pride flattered nor be corrupted. They will only be grateful and will be made better.*

It seems to me that if any education ought to produce the kind of politeness which M. Duclos calls for here, it is the one I have outlined up to now.

I agree, however, that with maxims so different from theirs, Emile

* *Considerations sur les moeurs de ce siècle* by M. Duclos, p. 65.

will not be like everyone else, and God preserve him from ever being so. But he will be neither troublesome nor ridiculous in his difference from others. This difference will be noticeable without being offensive. Emile will be, you might say, a likable foreigner. At first they will pardon him his singularities by saying, "He will develop." Later they will be completely accustomed to his ways, and since they see that he does not change, they will pardon him again by saying, "That's the way he is."

He will not be celebrated as a likable man, but they will like him without knowing why. No one will vaunt Emile's intelligence, but he will be gladly taken as a judge among intelligent men. His intelligence will be sharp and limited. He will have solid sense and healthy judgment. As he never runs after new ideas, he could not pride himself on his cleverness. I have made him feel that all the ideas which are salutary and truly useful to men were the first to be known; that in all times they constitute the only true bonds of society; and that the only way transcendent minds can now distinguish themselves is by means of ideas that are pernicious and destructive for mankind.

This way of becoming admired does not appeal to him very much. He knows where he ought to find the happiness of his life and how he can contribute to the happiness of others. The sphere of his knowledge does not extend farther than what is profitable. His route is narrow and well marked. He is not tempted to leave it, and so he remains indistinguishable from those who follow it. He wants neither to stray from his path nor to shine. Emile is a man of good sense, and he does not want to be anything else. One may very well try to insult him by this title; he will stick to it and always feel honored by it.

Although his desire to please does not leave him absolutely indifferent to the opinion of others, he will concern himself with their opinion only insofar as it relates immediately to his person, and he will not worry about arbitrary evaluations whose only law is fashion or prejudice. He will have the pride to want to do everything he does well, even to do it better than another. He will want to be the swiftest at running, the strongest at wrestling, the most competent at working, the most adroit at games of skill. But he will hardly seek advantages which are not clear in themselves and which need to be established by another's judgment, such as being more intelligent than someone else, talking better, being more learned, etc.; still less will he seek those advantages which are not at all connected with one's person, such as being of nobler birth, being esteemed richer, more influential, or more respected, or making an impression by greater pomp.

He loves men because they are his fellows, but he will especially love those who resemble him most because he will feel that he is good; and since he judges this resemblance by agreement in moral taste, he will be quite gratified to be approved in everything connected with good character. He will not precisely say to himself, "I rejoice because they approve of me," but rather, "I rejoice because they approve of what I have done that is good. I rejoice that the people who honor me do themselves honor. So long as they judge so soundly, it will be a fine thing to obtain their esteem."

While studying men's morals in society, as he previously studied their passions in history, he will often have occasion to reflect on what delights or offends the human heart. Now he is philosophizing about the principles of taste, and this is the study which suits him during this period.

The farther afield one goes in seeking definitions of taste, the more one loses one's way. Taste is only the faculty of judging what pleases or displeases the greatest number. Abandon that, and you no longer know what taste is. It does not follow that there are more people who have taste than others who lack it; for although the majority judge each object soundly, there are few men who judge as the majority do about everything. And although the conjunction of the most general tastes constitutes good taste, there are few people who have taste—just as there are few beautiful persons despite the fact that the union of the most common features constitutes beauty.

It should be noted that we are not dealing here with what we love because it is useful to us nor with what we hate because it harms us. Taste is exercised only in regard to things which are neutral or which are at most of interest as entertainment, and not in regard to those things connected with our needs. To judge the latter, taste is not necessary. Appetite alone suffices. This is what makes pure decisions of taste so difficult and, it seems, so arbitrary; for, apart from the instinct which determines it, one no longer sees the reason for these decisions. One must also distinguish between its laws in moral things and its laws in physical things. In regard to the latter the principles of taste seem absolutely inexplicable. But it is important to observe that something moral enters into everything connected with imitation.* In this way one can explain beauties which appear physical and which really are not. I shall add that taste has local rules which in countless things make it depend on climates, morals, government, institutions; that it has other rules connected with age, sex, character; and that it is in this sense that tastes should not be disputed.

Taste is natural to all men, but they do not all have it to the same degree; it does not develop in all men to the same degree; and in all it is subject to corruption due to diverse causes. The level of taste a man may reach depends on the sensitivity with which he has been endowed. The cultivation of taste and its form depend on the societies in which one has lived. First, one must live in societies with many members in order to make many comparisons. Second, one needs societies dedicated to entertainment and idleness; for societies dedicated to business are ruled not by pleasure but by interest. In the third place, one needs societies where inequality is not too great, where the tyranny of opinion is limited and where voluptuousness reigns more than vanity does; for in the opposite case, fashion stifles taste, and people no longer seek what pleases them but seek rather what distinguishes them.

In this latter case, it is no longer true that good taste is that of the greatest number. Why is that? Because the object of taste changes. Then

* This is proved in an essay on the *Principles of Melody* which will be found in the collection of my writings.[81]

the multitude no longer has judgment of its own. It now judges only according to the views of those whom it believes more enlightened than itself. It approves not what is good but what they have approved. In all times, see to it that each man has his own sentiments, and the plurality of votes will always go to what is most agreeable in itself.

In their works men make nothing beautiful except by imitation. All the true models of taste are in nature. The farther we move from this master, the more our paintings are disfigured. It is then that we draw our models from the objects we love; and beauty which has its source in whim is subject to caprice and authority and is no longer anything other than what pleases those who lead us.

Those who lead us are the artists, the nobles, and the rich, and what leads them is their interest or their vanity. The rich, in order to display their wealth, and the artists, in order to take advantage of that wealth, vie in the quest for new means of expense. This is the basis on which great luxury establishes its empire and leads people to love what is difficult and costly. Then what is claimed to be beautiful, far from imitating nature, is beautiful only by dint of thwarting it. This is how luxury and bad taste become inseparable. Wherever taste is expensive, it is false.

It is especially in the relations between the two sexes that taste, good or bad, gets its form. Its cultivation is a necessary effect of the aim of these relations. But when the ease of enjoyment cools the desire to please, taste must degenerate; and this, it seems to me, is another very evident reason why good taste depends on good morals.

Consult the taste of women in physical things connected with the judgment of the senses, but consult the taste of men in moral things that depend more on the understanding. When women are what they ought to be, they will limit themselves to things within their competence and will always judge well. But since they have established themselves as the arbiters of literature, since they have set about judging books and relentlessly producing them, they no longer know anything. Authors who consult the learned ladies about their works are always sure of being badly counseled. The gallants who consult them about their dress are always ridiculously attired. I shall soon have occasion to speak of the true talents of this sex, of the way to cultivate them, and of the things about which its decisions ought then to be heard.

These are the elementary considerations that I shall set down as principles in reasoning with my Emile about a matter which is far from indifferent to him in his present circumstances—and in the quest that occupies him. And to whom should it be indifferent? Knowledge of what can be agreeable or disagreeable to men is necessary not only to someone who needs men but also to someone who wishes to be useful to them. It is even important to please them in order to serve them, and the art of writing is far from an idle study when one uses it to make the truth heard.

If, in order to cultivate my disciple's taste, I had to choose between taking him to countries where there has not yet been any cultivation of taste and to others where taste has already degenerated, I would proceed

in reverse order. That is, I would begin his tour with the latter countries and end with the former. This reason for this choice is that taste is corrupted by an excessive delicacy which creates a sensitivity to things that the bulk of men do not perceive. This delicacy leads to a spirit of discussion, for the more subtle one is about things, the more they multiply. This subtlety makes feelings more delicate and less uniform. Then as many tastes are formed as there are individuals. In the disputes about preference, philosophy and enlightenment are extended, and it is in this way that one learns to think. Fine observations can hardly be made except by people who get around a lot, given that those observations strike us only after all the others and that people unaccustomed to large societies exhaust their attention on the gross features of things. At the present time there is perhaps not a civilized place on earth where the general taste is worse than in Paris. Nevertheless it is in this capital that good taste is cultivated, and there appear few books esteemed in Europe whose author has not been in Paris for the purpose of forming himself. Those who think that it suffices to read the books produced there are mistaken. One learns much more in conversation with authors than in their books, and the authors themselves are not those from whom one learns the most. It is the spirit of societies which develops a thoughtful mind and extends our vision as far as it can go. If you have a spark of genius, go and spend a year in Paris. Soon you will be all that you can be, or you will never be anything.

One can learn to think in places where bad taste reigns; but one must not think as do those who have this bad taste—and it is quite difficult for this not to happen when one stays among them too long. With their assistance one must perfect the instrument which judges, while avoiding using it as they do. I shall be careful not to polish Emile's judgment so much as to spoil it, and when his feelings are refined enough to sense and compare men's diverse tastes, I shall bring him back to simpler objects to establish his own taste.

I shall go further still to preserve in him a pure and healthy taste. Amidst the tumult of dissipation I shall know how to arrange useful discussions with him; and by always directing these discussions toward objects which please him, I shall take care to make them as enjoyable to him as they are instructive. This is the time for reading, for reading enjoyable books. This is the time to teach him how to analyze speech, to make him sensitive to all the beauties of eloquence and diction. It is trivial to learn languages for their own sake; their use is not as important as people believe. But the study of languages leads to that of grammar. Latin has to be learned in order to know French. Both must be studied and compared in order to understand the rules of the art of speaking.

There is, moreover, a certain simplicity of taste that speaks straight to the heart and is found only in the writings of the ancients. In eloquence, in poetry, in every kind of literature Emile will again find the ancients—as he found them in history—rich in facts and sparing in judgments. Our authors, by contrast, say little and make many pronouncements. Constantly to give us their judgment as the law is not the way to form our judgment. The difference between the two tastes

makes itself felt in all monuments, even including tombs. Our tombstones are covered with praise; on those of the ancients one read facts.

Sta viator, Heroem calcas [82]

Even if I had found this epitaph on an ancient monument, I would have immediately guessed that it was modern; for nothing is so ordinary among us as heroes, but among the ancients they were rare. Instead of saying that a man was a hero, they would have said what he had done to become one. To the epitaph of this hero compare that of the effeminate Sardanapalus:

I built Tarsus and Anchialus in a day
and now I am dead.[83]

Which says more in your opinion? Our bombastic lapidary style is good only for inflating dwarfs. The ancients showed men as they are naturally, and one saw that they were men. Xenophon, honoring the memory of some warriors who were treacherously killed during the retreat of the ten thousand, says, "They died irreproachable in war and in friendship." [84] That is all. But consider what must have filled the author's heart in writing this short and simple eulogy. Woe unto him who does not find that entrancing!

One read these words carved in marble at Thermopylae:

Passer-by, tell them at Sparta that we died here to obey
her holy laws.[85]

It is quite obvious that it was not the Academy of Inscriptions which wrote that.

I am mistaken if my pupil, who sets so little store by words, does not immediately turn his attention to these differences, and if they do not influence his choice of reading. Drawn by the masculine eloquence of Demosthenes, he will say, "This is an orator." But in reading Cicero, he will say, "This is a lawyer."

In general, Emile will get more of a taste for the books of the ancients than for ours, for the sole reason that the ancients, since they came first, are closest to nature and their genius is more their own. Whatever La Motte and the Abbé Terrasson may have said, there is no true progress of reason in the human species, because all that is gained on one side is lost on the other: all minds always start from the same point, and since the time used in finding out what others have thought is wasted for learning to think for ourselves, we have acquired more enlightenment and less vigor of mind. We exercise our minds, like our arms, by having them do everything with tools and nothing by themselves. Fontenelle said that this whole dispute about ancients and moderns comes down to knowing whether the trees in the past were bigger than those today.[86] If agriculture had changed, it would not be impertinent to ask this question.

After having thus helped Emile ascend to the sources of pure litera-

ture, I also show him its sewers in the reservoirs of modern compilers, newspapers, translations, and dictionaries. He casts a glance at all this, then leaves it never to return. In order to amuse him, I have him listen to the chatter of the academies; I see to it that he notices that the individuals who compose the academies are always worth more alone than as part of the group. He will draw for himself the implication about the utility of all these fine establishments.

I take him to the theater to study not morals but taste, for it is here that taste reveals itself to those who know how to reflect. "Leave aside precepts and morality," I would say to him, "it is not here that they are to be learned." The theater is not made for the truth. It is made to delight, to entertain men. There is no school in which one learns so well the art of pleasing men and of interesting the human heart. The study of the theater leads to that of poetry. They have exactly the same aim. If he has a spark of taste for it, with what pleasure he will cultivate the languages of the poets—Greek, Latin, and Italian! These studies will be entertainments without constraint for him, and thus he will profit all the more from them. They will be delicious to him at an age and in circumstances when his interest is aroused by the great charm of all the sorts of beauty capable of touching the heart. Picture my Emile, on the one hand, and a young college scamp, on the other, reading the fourth book of the *Aeneid,* or Tibullus, or Plato's *Banquet.* What a difference! How much the heart of the one is stirred by what does not even affect the other. O good young man, stop, suspend your reading. I see that you are too moved. I certainly want the language of love to please you, but I do not want it to lead you astray. Be a sensitive man, but also a wise one. If you are only one of the two, you are nothing. Moreover, I care little whether he succeeds or not at the dead languages, at letters, at poetry. He will be worth no less if he knows none of all that, and it is not with all these trifles that his education is concerned.

My principle aim in teaching him to feel and to love the beautiful of all sorts is to fix his affections and tastes on it, to prevent his natural appetites from becoming corrupted, and to see to it that he does not one day seek in his riches the means for being happy—means that he ought to find nearer to him. I have said elsewhere that taste is only the art of knowing all about petty things, and that is very true. But since the agreeableness of life depends on a tissue of petty things, such concerns are far from being matters of indifference. It is through such concerns that we learn to fill life with the good things within our reach in all the truth they can have for us. I am talking here not about the moral goods which depend on the good disposition of the soul, but only about what is connected with sensuality and with real voluptuousness, apart from prejudices and opinion.

Permit me for a moment, in order to develop my idea better, to leave aside Emile, whose pure and healthy heart can no longer serve as a rule for anyone, and to seek in myself an example that is more evident and closer to the morals of the reader.

There are situations which seem to change our nature and to recast, for better or worse, the men who fill them. A poltroon becomes brave

upon entering the regiment of Navarre. It is not only in the military that one gets esprit de corps, and its effects are not always to the good. I have a hundred times thought with terror that if I had the misfortune today of filling a particular position in a certain country, tomorrow I would almost inevitably be a tyrant, an extortionist, a destroyer of the people, and a source of harm to the prince; due to my situation I would be an enemy of all humanity, of all equity, of every sort of virtue.

Similarly, if I were rich, I would have done everything necessary to become so. I would therefore be insolent and low, sensitive and delicate toward myself alone, pitiless and hard toward everyone else, a disdainful spectactor of the miseries of the rabble—for I would no longer give any other name to the indigent, in order to make people forget that I once belonged to their class. Finally, I would make my fortune the instrument of my pleasures, with which I would be wholly occupied. Up to this point I would be like all other rich men.

But I believe I would differ from them very much by being sensual and voluptuous rather than proud and vain and by devoting myself to indolent luxury far more than to ostentatious luxury. I would even be somewhat ashamed to display my riches too much; I would always believe I saw the envious man whom I had overwhelmed with my pomp saying into his neighbor's ear, "Here is a rascal who is very much afraid of being known for what he is!"

From this immense profusion of goods which cover the earth I would seek what is most agreeable to me and what I could best make use of. To that end, the first use of my riches would be to purchase leisure and freedom, to which I would add health, if it were for sale. But since it is purchased only with temperance and since there is no true pleasure in life without health, I would be temperate out of sensuality.

I would always stay as close as possible to nature, in order to indulge the senses I received from nature—quite certain that the more nature contributed to my enjoyments, the more reality I would find in them. In choosing objects for imitation, I would always take nature as my model; in my appetites I would always give it preference; in my tastes I would always consult it; in foods I would always want those which are best prepared by nature and pass through the fewest hands before reaching our tables. I would prevent myself from becoming the victim of fraudulent adulterations by going out after pleasure myself. My foolish and coarse gluttony would not enrich an innkeeper. He would not sell me terribly expensive poison in the guise of fish. My table would not be covered with a display of magnificent garbage and exotic carrion. I would lavish my own efforts on the satisfaction of my sensuality, since then those efforts are themselves a pleasure and thus add to the pleasure one expects from them. If I wanted to taste a dish from the end of the earth, I would, like Apicius,[87] go and seek it out rather than have it brought to me. For the most exquisite dishes always lack a seasoning that does not travel with them and no cook can give them: the air of the climate which produced them.

For the same reason I would not imitate those who are never contented with where they are and thus always put the seasons in contradiction with one another and the climate in contradiction with the

season. These are the people who seek summer in winter and winter in summer, who go to Italy when it is cold and to the north when it is warm, unaware that in intending to escape the rigor of the seasons they encounter it in places where men have not learned to protect themselves from it. I would remain where I was, or I would take exactly the opposite course. I would want to extract from each season all that is agreeable in it and from each climate all that is peculiar to it. I would have a diversity of pleasures and habits which would not resemble one another and which would always be part of nature. I would go to spend the summer at Naples and the winter at Petersburg—now inhaling a gentle breeze while reclining in the cool grottoes of Tarentum, now enjoying the illuminations of an ice palace, out of breath and exhausted by the pleasures of the ball.

In the setting of my table and the decorating of my dwelling, I would want to imitate the variety of the seasons with very simple ornaments and to extract all its delights from each season without anticipating the ones that will follow it. It takes effort—and not taste—to disturb the order of nature, to wring from it involuntary produce which it gives reluctantly and with its curse. Such produce has neither quality nor savor; it can neither nourish the stomach nor delight the palate. Nothing is more insipid than early fruits and vegetables. It is only at great expense that the rich man of Paris succeeds, with his stoves and hothouses, in having bad vegetables and bad fruits on his table the whole year round. If I could have cherries when it is freezing and amber-colored melons in the heart of winter, what pleasure would I take in them when my palate needs neither moistening nor cooling? Would the heavy chestnut be very agreeable to me during the broiling dog days of summer? Would I prefer it—straight from the oven—to currants, strawberries, and other refreshing fruits that the earth offers me without so much trouble? To cover the mantel of one's fireplace in the month of January with forced vegetation, with pale and odorless flowers, is less to embellish winter than to spoil spring; it is to take away the pleasure of going into the woods to seek the first violet, spy out the first bud, and shout in a fit of joy, "Mortals, you have not been abandoned; nature still lives."

In order to be well served, I would have few domestics. This has already been said, and it is well to say it yet again. A bourgeois gets more true service from his only lackey than a duke gets from the ten gentlemen surrounding him. I have a hundred times thought that, with my glass beside me at the table, I drink at the instant I please; whereas if I dined in grand style, twenty voices would have to repeat "Drink" before I could quench my thirst. Try as you will, all that is done by means of other people is done badly. I would not send someone to shop for me, I would go myself. I would go in order to prevent my servants from making deals with the shopkeepers and to choose more surely and pay less dearly. I would go in order to take some agreeable exercise, to see a bit of what goes on outside of the house—it is entertaining, and sometimes it is instructive. Finally I would go in order to go—that is always something. Boredom begins with too sedentary a life.

When one goes out a great deal, one rarely gets bored. A porter and some lackeys are poor interpreters. I would not want to have these people always between me and the rest of the world, nor would I want always to move accompanied by the roar of a carriage, as though I were afraid of being approached. The horses of a man who uses his legs are always ready. If his horses are tired or sick, he knows it before anyone, and he is not afraid of being obliged to give this excuse for staying at home when his coachman decides to take off on a lark. On the road countless delays do not make him fidget impatiently or stand still at the moment when he would want to hurry ahead. In sum, if no one ever serves us so well as ourselves—even if we were more powerful than Alexander or richer than Croesus—we ought to receive from others only the services that we cannot get from ourselves.

I would not want to have a palace for a dwelling, for in that palace I would inhabit only one room. Every common room belongs to no one, and the room of each of my servants would be as foreign to me as that of my neighbor. The Orientals, although quite voluptuous, have simple houses and furniture. They regard life as a journey, and their home as a way station. This argument has little effect on us rich people who are arranging to live forever; but I have a different one which would produce the same effect. It would seem to me that to set myself up with so much gear in one place would be to banish myself from all others and to imprison myself, so to speak, in my palace. The world itself is a fine enough palace. Does not everything belong to the rich man when he wants to enjoy himself? *Ubi bene, ibi patria* [88] is his motto; his lares are the places where money can buy anything; his country is wherever his strongbox can go, just as Philip possessed every fortress where a mule bearing money could enter.[89] Why then be circumscribed by walls and by gates as though one were never to leave? Does an epidemic, a war, a revolt drive me out of some place? I go to another and find my mansion has gotten there before me. Why bother building mansions for myself, when others do it for me throughout the universe? Since I am in such a hurry to live, why prepare so far in advance enjoyments that are available to me right now? No one could make an agreeable lot for himself if he were constantly living in contradiction with himself. It is thus that Empedocles reproached the Agrigentines for cramming in pleasures as though they had only a day to live and building as though they were never going to die.[90]

Moreover, what is the use of so vast a lodging to me, since I have so little with which to people it and less with which to fill it? My furnishings would be as simple as my tastes. I would have neither gallery nor library, especially if I liked reading and knew something about paintings. I would then know that such collections are never complete and that the absence of what is lacking causes more chagrin than having nothing at all. In this, abundance makes poverty; there is not a single collector who has not experienced it. When someone has knowledge of such things, he ought not to make collections. A man has no study to show to others when he knows how to use it for himself.

Gambling is not a rich man's entertainment; it is the resource of the

unemployed; and my pleasures would give me too much activity to leave me much time to fill so poorly. Since I am solitary and poor, I do not gamble at all, except sometimes at chess, and even that is too much. If I were rich, I would gamble still less and only for very small stakes, in order not to see any malcontents and not to be one. Since the opulent man lacks a motive for gambling, his interest in it can never turn into a rage, except if he has an ill-constituted mind. The profits that a rich man can make at gambling are always less perceptible to him than his losses. And since gambling for moderate stakes—where the winnings are played away in the long run—in general winds up producing more losses than gains, anyone who reasons well cannot be very fond of an entertainment in which the risks of every sort are against him. Whoever feeds his vanity on the preferences of fortune can seek them in much more piquant objects, and these preferences are no more marked in the smallest game than in the biggest. The taste for gambling is the fruit of avarice and boredom, and it takes hold only in an empty mind and heart; it seems to me that I would have enough sentiment and knowledge to do without such a supplement. One rarely sees thinkers enjoying themselves much in gambling, which interrupts the habit of thinking or turns it to arid combinations of elements. Thus one of the good things, and perhaps the only one, which the taste for the sciences has produced is to deaden this sordid passion a bit; people would rather exert themselves to prove the utility of gambling than to indulge in it. I would combat gambling among gamblers, and I would get more pleasure out of ridiculing them when they lose than out of winning their money.

I would be the same in my private life and in my social relations. I would want my fortune to provide ease everywhere and never to create a feeling of inequality. Garishness of dress is inconvenient in countless respects. In order to retain all possible liberty, when I am among other men, I would want to be dressed in such a way that in every rank I appeared to be in my place, and that I did not stand out in any—so that without affectation and without changing my appearance I could be one of the people at the *guinguette* and good company at the Palais-Royal.[91] In this way I would be more the master of my conduct, and I would put the pleasures of all stations always within my reach. It is said that there are women who close their doors on embroidered cuffs and receive no one who does not wear lace. I would go and spend my day elsewhere. But if these women were young and pretty, I could sometimes put on lace in order to spend—at the very most—the night there.

The only bond of my associations would be mutual attachment, agreement of tastes, suitableness of characters. I would give myself over to them as a man and not as one of the rich. I would never permit their charms to be poisoned by interest. If my opulence had left me some humanity, I would extend my services and my benefactions at a distance, but I would want to have a society around me, not a court; friends, and not protegés. I would not be the patron of my guests; I would be their host. This independence and equality would permit my

relationships to have all the candor of benevolence; and where neither duty nor interest entered in any way, pleasure and friendship would alone make the law.

Neither a friend nor a mistress can be bought. It is easy to have women with money, but that way one is never the lover of any of them. Far from being for sale, love is infallibly killed by money. Whoever pays for it—even if he is the most lovable of men—by that fact alone cannot be loved for long. Soon he will be paying for another man, or, rather, that other man will be paid with his money. And in this double liaison—formed by interest and debauchery, without love, without honor, without true pleasure—the greedy, unfaithful, and miserable woman is treated by the vile man who takes her money as she treats the foolish man who gives it to her, and thus she breaks even between the two. It would be sweet to be liberal toward the person one loves, if this did not constitute a purchase. I know only one way of satisfying this inclination toward one's mistress without poisoning love. It is to give her everything and then to be supported by her. It remains to be known where there is a woman with whom this procedure would not be a folly.

He who said, "I possess Laïs without her possessing me," [92] uttered a witless phrase. Possession which is not reciprocal is nothing. It is at most possession of the sexual organ, not of the individual. Now, where the moral aspect of love is not present, why make so great a business of the rest? Nothing is so easy to find. A mule driver is in that respect closer to happiness than is a millionaire.

Oh, if one could sufficiently unfold the inconsistencies of vice, how wide of its mark one would find it, precisely when it gets what it wanted! Why this barbarous avidity to corrupt innocence, to make a victim of a young person who ought to have been protected, and who by this first step is inevitably dragged into an abyss of miseries from which she will emerge only at death? Brutality, vanity, folly, error, and nothing more. The pleasure itself does not come from nature; it comes from opinion, and from the vilest opinion, since it is connected with self-contempt. He who feels himself to be the basest of men fears comparison with all others and wants to be the first to get there in order to be less odious. Consider whether those most avid for this imaginary dish are ever lovable young people, worthy of winning favor, who would be more excusable for being hard to please? No, someone who has looks, merit, and sentiments has little to fear from an experienced mistress. With justified confidence, such a man says to her, "You know the pleasures. It makes no difference. My heart promises you pleasures you have never known."

But an old satyr—worn out by debauchery, without charm, without respect, without consideration, without any kind of decency, incapable and unworthy of pleasing any woman who knows anything about lovable people—believes he can make up for all that with a young innocent by taking advantage of her inexperience and stirring her senses for the first time. His last hope is to be attractive by means of novelty. That is incontestably the secret motive of this whim. But he is mis-

taken. The disgust he causes comes from nature as much as do the desires he would like to arouse. He is also mistaken in his foolish expectations; this same nature is careful to claim its rights: any girl who sells herself has already given herself to someone else and, having given herself to the man of her choice, she has made the comparison the old satyr fears. He therefore buys an imaginary pleasure and is nonetheless abhorred.

As for me, for all that I may change when I am rich, there is one point on which I shall never change. If neither morals nor virtue remain to me, at least there will remain some taste, some sense, some delicacy. This will protect me from being the dupe of my fortune, from using it to run after chimeras, from exhausting my purse and my life in getting myself betrayed and ridiculed by children. If I were young, I would seek the pleasures of youth; and wanting them in all their voluptuousness, I would not seek them as a rich man. If I remained as I am now, that would be another matter. I would prudently limit myself to the pleasures of my age. I would indulge the tastes that I could enjoy, and I would stifle those which would no longer be anything but my torture. I would not expose my gray beard to the mocking disdain of young girls. I could not bear to see my disgusting caresses make them sick to the stomach, to provide them with the most ridiculous stories at my expense, or to imagine them describing the dirty pleasures of the old ape in such a way as to avenge themselves for having endured them. And if unconquered habits had turned my old desires into needs, I would perhaps satisfy them, but I would blush with shame. I would remove the passion from the need; I would find as good a match as was possible for me, and I would leave it at that. I would not make an occupation of my weakness; and, above all, I would not want to have more than a single witness to it. Human life has other pleasures when these are lacking; by vainly running after those that flee, we also deprive ourselves of those that are left to us. Let us change tastes with the years; let us not displace ages any more than seasons. One must be oneself at all times and not battle against nature. Such vain efforts use up life and prevent us from making good use of it.

The people hardly ever get bored. Their life is active. If their entertainments are not varied, they are rare. Many days of fatigue make them taste a few days of festival with delight. An alternation of long periods of labor and short periods of leisure takes the place of seasoning in the pleasures of the people. For the rich, boredom is their great plague. Amongst so many entertainments assembled at great expense, in the midst of so many people joining together to please them, boredom consumes them and kills them. They pass their lives in fleeing it and in being overtaken by it. They are overwhelmed by its unbearable weight. Women who no longer know how to occupy or entertain themselves are especially devoured by it, under the name of vapors. For them boredom is transformed into a horrible illness which sometimes deprives them of their reason and finally their lives. As for me, I know of no fate more frightful than that of a pretty woman of Paris—except for that of the agreeable little fellow who attaches himself to her and is also turned into an idle woman, thus becoming doubly removed from

his station. The vanity of being a lady's man enables him to bear the length of the gloomiest days that any human creature has ever spent.

The propriety, the fashions, and the customs which derive from luxury and high style confine the course of life to the dullest uniformity. The pleasure one wants to enjoy in others' eyes is lost for everyone; it is enjoyed neither by them nor by oneself.* Ridicule, which opinion dreads above all else, is always at its side to tyrannize it and to punish it. A person is never ridiculous except when he follows fixed practices. He who knows how to vary his situations and his pleasures effaces today the impression he made the day before. He is nothing in men's minds, but he enjoys himself, for he devotes himself entirely to each hour and to each thing he does. This would be my only constant practice. In each situation I would be occupied with no other, and I would take each day by itself as though it were independent of the day before and the day after. Just as I would be one of the people when I am among the people, I would be a rustic when I am in the country. And when I spoke of agriculture, the peasants would not make fun of me. I would not build myself a city in the country and set up the Tuileries at my doorstep deep in the provinces. I would have a little rustic house—a white house with green shutters—on the slope of some agreeable, well-shaded hill. Although a thatch roof would be the best in every season, I would grandly prefer not gloomy slate but tile, because it makes a cleaner and gayer impression than thatch and because that is how the houses are roofed in my country—it would remind me a little of the happy time of my youth. Instead of a courtyard, I would have a farmyard, and instead of a stable, a shed full of cows, so that I would have the dairy products I like so much. For my garden I would have a vegetable patch, and for my park, a pretty orchard similar to the one which will be spoken about hereafter. The fruits would be freely available to strollers and would neither be counted nor gathered by my gardener; my avaricious magnificence would not display to the eyes stately espaliers which one would hardly dare to touch. This petty prodigality would not be very costly, because I would have chosen my haven in some distant province where one sees little money and many commodities, and where abundance and poverty reign.

There I would gather a society that was select rather than large, composed of friends who love pleasure and know something about it, and of women who are able to leave their easy chairs and take part in pastoral games—women who will sometimes take up, instead of the shuttle and cards, fishing lines, bird snares, the haymaker's rake, and the harvester's basket. There all the fashions of the city would be forgotten; and, becoming villagers in the village, we would surrender ourselves to throngs of diverse entertainments; our only difficulty each evening would be which entertainment to choose for the next day.

* Two women of the world, in order to give the impression of enjoying themselves very much, make it a law for themselves never to go to bed before five in the morning. Amidst the rigor of winter their servants spend the night in the street waiting for them, at a loss about how to prevent themselves from freezing. One evening or, to put it better, one morning, someone enters the apartment where these two persons who have such a good time let the hours flow by without counting them. He finds them entirely alone, each asleep in her easy chair.

Exercise and the active life would provide us with new digestions and new tastes. All our meals would be feasts where abundance would please more than delicacy. Gaiety, rustic labors, and frolicsome games are the premier chefs of the world, and delicate ragouts are quite ridiculous to people who have been breathless since sunrise. The serving would be neither orderly nor elegant. The dining room would be everywhere—in the garden, in a boat, under a tree, or sometimes near a distant spring, on the cool, green grass, beneath clumps of elder and hazel. A long procession of merry guests would sing while carrying the preparations for the feast. We would have the lawn for our table and chairs; the ledges of the fountain would serve as our buffet table; and the dessert would hang from the trees. The dishes would be served without order; appetite would dispense with ceremony. Each of us, openly preferring himself to everyone else, would find it good that all the others similarly preferred themselves to him. From this cordial and moderate familiarity there would arise—without coarseness, without falseness, and without constraint—a playful conflict a hundred times more charming than politeness and more likely to bind together our hearts. There would be no importunate lackeys spying on our conversation, whispering criticisms of our demeanor, counting our helpings with a greedy eye, or enjoying themselves by making us wait for our drinks and muttering about our taking too long at dinner. We would be our own valets in order to be our own masters; each of us would be served by all the others; the time would pass without being measured. The repast would be our repose and would last as long as the heat of the day. If some peasant returning to work with his tools on his shoulder passed near us, I would gladden his heart with some good talk and a drink of good wine, which would make him bear his poverty more gaily; and I would also have the pleasure of feeling deep in my vitals an emotion of sympathy, secretly saying to myself, "I am still a man."

If some country celebration brought the inhabitants of the place together, my companions and I would be among the first ones there. If some country marriages—more blessed by heaven than city ones—took place in my neighborhood, it would be known that I like joy, and I would be invited. I would bring these good people some gifts as simple as they are, which would contribute to the celebration, and I would find in exchange goods of an inestimable value, goods so little known to my equals—frankness and true pleasure. I would sup gaily at the end of their long table. I would join in the refrain of an old rustic song, and I would dance in their barn more gladly than at the opera ball.

"Up to this point everything is marvelous," I will be told, "but what about the hunt? Is one really in the country if one does not hunt?" I understand. I only wanted a little farm, and I was wrong. I assume that I am rich; therefore I must have exclusive pleasures, destructive pleasures. This is an entirely different affair. I need lands, woods, guards, rents, seignorial honors, and, above all, incense and holy water.

Very well. But this land will have neighbors jealous of their rights and desirous of usurping those of others. Our guards will squabble, and so perhaps will their masters. Now there are altercations, quarrels,

hatreds, lawsuits, at the very least. Already things are no longer very agreeable. My vassals will not take pleasure in seeing their wheat ripped up by my hares and their beans ripped up by my boars. Not daring to kill the enemy who destroys his work, each will at least want to drive him from his field. After having spent the day cultivating their lands, they will have to spend the night guarding them. They will have watchdogs, drums, cornets, bells. With all this racket they will disturb my sleep. In spite of myself, I shall think of the misery of these poor people and will not be able to refrain from reproaching myself for it. If I had the honor of being a prince, all this would hardly touch me. But as I would be a parvenu who had recently become rich, I would still have a trace of a plebeian heart.

That is not all. The abundance of the game will tempt hunters. There will soon be poachers whom I shall have to punish. I shall need prisons, jailers, armed guards, galleys. All this appears rather cruel to me. The wives of these unfortunate men will come to besiege my doors and to importune me with their cries, or they will have to be driven away and maltreated. Those among the poor who have not poached and whose harvest has been foraged by my game will also come to complain. The former group will be punished for having killed the game, and the latter ruined for having spared it. What a sad choice! I shall see only examples of misery on all sides; I shall hear only groans. It seems to me that this ought greatly to disturb the pleasure of massacring at one's ease—practically under one's feet—throngs of partridges and hares.

Do you wish to disengage the pleasures from their pains? Then remove exclusiveness from the pleasures. The more you leave them to men in common, the more you will always taste them pure. Therefore I shall not do all that I just said; but, without changing tastes, I shall at less expense pursue the taste I am here supposing is mine. I shall establish my country abode in a spot where the hunt is open to everyone, and where I can have the entertainment without the bother. The game will be rarer, but there will be more skill in seeking it and more pleasure in shooting it. I remember the heartthrobs that my father experienced at the flight of the first partridge, and the transports of joy with which he found the hare he had sought all day. Yes, I maintain that my father, alone with his dog and burdened with his rifle, his game bag, his kit, and his little prey, returned in the evening—exhausted and ripped by brambles—more satisfied by his day than all your ladies' men passing as hunters who, riding a good horse and followed by twenty loaded rifles, do nothing but change rifles, shoot, and kill things around them without art, without glory, and almost without exercise. The pleasure is not any less, then, and the inconvenience is removed when one has neither land to guard nor poachers to punish nor unfortunate people to torment. Here, then, is a solid reason for preference. No matter what the situation, one does not torment men endlessly without also receiving some discomfort from it; and the continued maledictions of the people sooner or later make the game bitter.

Yet another point. Exclusive pleasures are the death of pleasure. True entertainments are those one shares with the people. Those one wants to have for oneself alone, one no longer has at all. If the walls I raise around my park make it a gloomy cloister for me, I have at great expense done nothing but deprive myself of the pleasure of walking. Now I am forced to go far away to seek it. The demon of property infects everything it touches. A rich man wants to be the master everywhere and is only well off where he is not the master; he is always forced to flee from himself. As for me, when I am rich, I shall act in this respect just as I did when I was poor. I am richer now with the property of others than I shall ever be with my own—I lay hold of all that suits me in my vicinity. There is no conqueror more determined than I am. I usurp even from princes. I make myself at home on any open pieces of land that please me. I give them names. I make one my park, another my terrace, and so I am their master. From then on, I walk about on them with impunity. I return often to maintain possession. By dint of walking on them, I use their soil as much as I want; and I shall never be persuaded that the man who holds the title to the property I appropriate draws more use from the money it yields for him than I draw from his land. And if they come to vex me with ditches and hedges, it matters little to me. I take my park on my shoulders, and I go to set it down elsewhere. Sites are not lacking in the vicinity, and I shall be pillaging my neighbors for a long time before I lack a haven.

This is a kind of essay on true taste in the choice of agreeable leisure. This is the spirit in which a person enjoys himself. All the rest is only illusion, chimera, foolish vanity. Whoever deviates from these rules, however rich he may be, will find that his gold will buy him nothing but manure and will never know the value of life.

Someone will doubtless object that such entertainments are within the reach of all men and that one does not need to be rich to enjoy them. This is precisely what I wanted to get at. One has pleasure when one wants to have it. It is only opinion that makes everything difficult and drives happiness away from us. It is a hundred times easier to be happy than to appear to be happy. The man who has taste and is truly voluptuous has nothing to do with riches. It suffices for him to be free and master of himself. Whoever enjoys health and does not lack the necessities is rich enough if he roots the goods of opinion out of his heart. It is Horace's *aurea mediocritas*.[93] So, you men with strongboxes, seek some other use for your opulence, since it is good for nothing so far as pleasure is concerned. Emile will not know all this better than I do, but since he has a purer and healthier heart, he will feel it even more keenly, and all his observations in society will only confirm it for him.

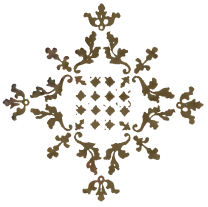
While thus passing the time, we are still in search of Sophie, and we do not find her. It was important that she not be found so quickly, and we have looked for her where I was quite sure she was not to be found.*

Finally, the moment has come. It is time to seek her in earnest, lest he find someone on his own whom he takes for her and not learn

* *Mulierum fortem quis inveniet? Procul, et de ultimis finibus pretium eius.* Proverbs 31:10.[94]

his error until it is too late. Adieu, then, Paris, celebrated city, city of noise, smoke, and mud, where the women no longer believe in honor and the men no longer believe in virtue. Adieu, Paris. We are seeking love, happiness, innocence. We shall never be far enough away from you.

End of the Fourth Book



1. Homer *Odyssey* X 19–75.
2. The following lines were written in the earliest draft of *Emile* and then crossed out: "If I am asked how it is possible for the morality of human life to emerge from a purely physical revolution, I will answer that I do not know. I base myself throughout on experience and do not seek the reasons for the facts. I do not know what connection there may be between the seminal spirits and the soul's affects,

between sexual development and the sentiment of good and evil. I see that these connections exist. I reason not to explain them but to draw out their consequences."

3. In both the manuscript and in the corrections for a future edition Rousseau wrote, "if there are any."

4. In an early draft Rousseau had written, and then crossed out, in the place of the preceding sentence the following one: "One takes an interest in him, one helps him in his misfortunes because one hopes that they will end and then one will be recompensed."

5. "Not ignorant of ills, I learn to assist the needy." Virgil *Aeneid* I 630.

6. Rousseau probably refers to the *Thousand and One Nights*.

7. This passage is an important commentary on the apparent Stoicism to be found elsewhere in *Emile*, particularly at the beginning of Book II.

8. The French word translated by *face* is *physionomie*, and Rousseau here tries to give a serious explanation of the phenomena treated by the pseudoscience of physiognomy.

9. The public square in Paris where executions took place and where men out of work gathered.

10. Military recruiters tricked men by giving them money which was later alleged to be a bonus for enlistment. Cf. Voltaire *Candide* II.

11. Cf. Plato *Republic* I 338D–339A. The investigation proposed here by Rousseau is identical to that undertaken in the *Republic*.

12. Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* V 3; Montaigne *Essays* I 26.

13. Historical novels by La Calprenède.

14. Montaigne *Essays* II 10. Montaigne wrote "what *comes from* within" and not *takes place*.

15. Charles Duclos, who wrote a history of Louis XI, *Considerations sur les moeurs de ce siècle* and *Memoires pour servir a l'histoire du XVIIIe siècle*, was one of Rousseau's earliest literary friends and one of the last with whom he broke.

16. Plutarch *Fabius Maximus* XV.

17. Plutarch *Agesilaus* XXV.

18. Plutarch *Caesar* XI.

19. Cf. pp. 110–111 and note 32 above.

20. Plutarch *Aristides* VII.

21. Plutarch *Philopoeman* II.

22. Andrew Ramsey (1686–1743), a Scotsman, became French in the service of the Stuart pretenders to the British throne; he was a disciple of Fénelon. He wrote a biography of Turenne.

23. Turenne was the second son of the Duc de Bouillon, sovereign prince of Sedan. The son of his older brother succeeded to the dukedom.

24. Plutarch *Pyrrhus* XIV.

25. Ibid. XXXIV.

26. Suetonius *Augustus* XXIII.

27. Ibid. LXV; Tacitus *Annals* I 3–6.

28. Plutarch *Gaius Marius* XXIII.

29. "The Venetian character in Italian comedy represented as a lean and foolish old man, wearing spectacles, pantaloons, and slippers. Hence in modern harlequinade or pantomime, a character represented as a foolish and vicious old man, the butt of the clown's [harlequin's] jokes, and his abettor in his pranks and tricks" (*Oxford English Dictionary*, s. v. "pantaloon").

30. *Fables* I iii:

> The world is full of people who are no wiser;
> Every bourgeois wants to build like great lords;
> Every little prince has ambassadors;
> Every marquis wants to have pages.

31. In a slightly different formulation of this paragraph in the earlier manuscripts, the preceding sentence is replaced by the following revealing one: "All this is to his advantage in any event, for you must consider that I am making him beneficent here not for the advantage of others but for his own instruction."

32. *Some Thoughts*, in Axtell, ed., *Locke's Educational Writings*, paragraphs 190–192; cf. paragraphs 136–139; and pp. 134–137 above.

33. Genesis 31:19, 32.

34. The Algonquin Indians.

35. In the earliest draft of *Emile* Rousseau formulates this tentative assertion of the existence of two substances even more tentatively. He leaves the irreducibility of spirit to matter as a question. *O.C.* IV, pp. 218–219.

36. Plutarch *Dialogue on Love* 756B.

37. Plutarch *On Superstition* 169F–170A; Bayle *Pensées diverses sur la comète* CXV.

38. Horace *Odes* II i 7–8. "I walk on fires covered by deceitful cinders." Horace wrote *you*. The context is a lament for the destruction of the republic, the bloodshed

of the civil wars, and the establishment of universal tyranny. The "you" refers to Asinius Pollion, who wrote a history of the civil wars and who, according to Horace, defended accused men. This is the role Rousseau adopts.

39. *Vitam impendere vero,* "Dedicate life to truth," Juvenal *Satires* IV 91. Rousseau uses this quote as the epigraph of *Letters from the Mountain.* His typical use of it can be seen in *Letter to d'Alembert* (A. Bloom, ed. and trans. [Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1968]), p. 132. He discusses the problem of living according to this motto in *Dreams of a Solitary Walker* IV. The original context of the quote should be considered.

40. The autobiographical elements of the following section can be compared to *Confessions, O.C.* I, pp. 60–70, 90–92, 118–119; Everyman's I, pp. 52–61, 80–83, 106–107.

41. In the earlier manuscripts Rousseau wrote ". . . in order to set aside low thoughts in our souls and lift us up to sublime contemplations."

42. Samuel Clarke (1675–1729), English theologian, admirer of the teachings of Descartes, friend of Newton, and famous for his correspondence with Leibniz, published a work called *A Discourse concerning the Being and Attributes of God, the Obligations of Natural Religion, and the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Revelation, in opposition to Hobbes, Spinoza, the author of the Oracles of Reason, and other Deniers of Natural and Revealed Religion.*

43. Charles-Marie de la Condamine, *Relation abregé d'un voyage fait dans l'interieur de l'Amerique meridionale,* Paris 1745, pp. 66–67.

44. Descartes *Principles of Philosophy* III 43–47.

45. I.e., centrifugal.

46. Amatus Lusitanus and Paracelsus were famous doctors of the sixteenth century.

47. Bernard Nieuwentyt, a Dutch doctor (1654–1718), wrote a book entitled *The Existence of God Demonstrated by the Wonders of Nature.*

48. *Essay on Human Understanding* IV 3–6.

49. Plutarch *Epicurus actualy makes a pleasant life impossible* 1105C.

50. The third line is not in the psalm, and there is nothing in it as a whole which has to do with afterlife. Rather it relates entirely to God's role on earth and to living men.

51. Condillac *Traité des animaux* II 5. However cf. p. 62 above and *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality, O.C.* III, p. 135; R. Masters, ed., *The Discourses,* pp. 105–106.

52. For example, in *Essays* I 23.

53. The word is *fantaisie,* which has elsewhere been translated by *whim.*

54. Pierre Charron (1541–1603), a friend of Montaigne and strongly influenced by the *Essays.* His motto was the "I don't know" adopted by Jean-Jaques and Emile (p. 206). A theologal is a canon attached to a diocesan cathedral whose function is to teach theology.

55. Plutarch *On Stoic Self-contradictions,* 1034E–F.

56. *Exposition de la doctrine de l'Eglise Catholique sur les matières de controverse.*

57. Johann Reuchlin (1455–1522), German, Greek, and Hebrew scholar. He tried to preserve almost all the books of the Jews and vigorously defended himself against his antagonists who thought the Jews would be converted if they no longer had their books. He proposed that there be two chairs of Hebrew at every German university. Jewish worship was licensed by Papal and Imperial law at the time, and ultimately the books were not burned. Reuchlin was in continual controversy around the issue for seven years (1510–1517) and was charged before the Inquisition.

58. *Republic* II 361B–362A.

59. He was a real person, a minister of the king of Sardinia. Cf. *Confessions, O.C.* I, p. 90; Everyman's I, p. 80.

60. Bayle, *Pensées sur la comète* CXIV, CXXXIII, and CLXII. Cf. p. 259 and note 37 above.

61. Cf. Leviticus 25.

62. Cf. II, note 55 above. Where Rousseau writes "etc." at the end of the previous paragraph, Chardin wrote that the bridge ". . . narrower than a stretched hair and sharper than a razor's edge, is impossible to walk on without being supported by God's all-powerful hand. The unbelievers and the wicked will stumble at the first step and fall into the *Gehenne* of the eternal fire. But for the believers God will steady their feet on this narrow path. By God's mercy they will pass over this bridge more quickly than a bird cleaves the air and will enter eternal Paradise."

Rousseau leaves out the direct intervention of God and the emphasis on belief or faith and concentrates on justice among human beings.

63. *The Profession of Faith of a Savoyard Vicar* had fatal consequences for Rousseau. It was condemned by the Catholics in France and the Protestants in Geneva. He thereby fell afoul of the authorities and became that outcast so familiar from *Confessions* and *Dreams of a Solitary Walker.* He explicitly elaborated

the discussion of religion in his *Lettre à Beaumont* and *Lettres écrites de la Montaigne*, although the theme pervades all his works. The theological-political situation was such that he, no more than Charron (cf. p. 296 above), could say directly all he thought on the question, and his own views can only be elaborated on the basis of all his works. The teaching of the Vicar should be compared to Rousseau's statement on civil religion, *Social Contract* IV 8.

64. *Essays* II 2.

65. Genesis 26:32–33; 16:14; 18:1; 21:46–48.

66. Bucentaur was the name of the state galley. Every year—from the eleventh through the eighteenth centuries—on Ascension Day the Doge was wed to the Adriatic on its deck.

67. Herodotus *Histories* V 92. Thrasybulus, tyrant of Miletus in the seventh century B.C., received an ambassador sent by Periander of Corinth who asked for general advice. Thrasybulus replied nothing but silently walked through the cornfields cutting off the tops of the highest stalks. This was taken by Periander to mean that he must do away with all outstanding men in his city. Essentially the same story is told by Livy (*Roman History* I 54) with Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, the last of the kings, taking the place of Thrasybulus and his son Sextus that of Periander. In Livy it is poppies which are leveled.

68. Plutarch *Alexander* 39. Alexander thus commanded Hephaestion not to reveal what he had read in a letter to Alexander from his mother.

69. Diogenes Laertius *Lives of the Philosophers* VI 39. Zeno in his paradoxes denied the existence of motion. Diogenes' refutation, which Dr. Johnson imitated in his refutation of Berkeley (although Johnson had the bad taste to enunciate his conclusion), was not performed in the presence of Zeno but of some unnamed man who made the assertion. Diogenes Laertius does not mention Zeno who lived more than a century before Diogenes.

70. Herodotus *Histories* IV 132. As interpreted by Gobryas (Darius at first interpreted it otherwise) the message was, "Unless you Persians become birds and fly up in the sky, or mice and hide yourselves in the earth, or frogs and leap into the lakes, you will never return home again, having been struck by these arrows."

71. "Toga: the outer garment of a citizen. Sagum: the military cloak. Praetext: the youth's first outer clothing, worn until he assumed the man's toga. Bulla: a golden amulet worn by patrician youths until they assumed the man's toga. Laticlave: a badge consisting of two broad purple stripes on the edge of the tunic, worn by senators and other persons of high rank" (*Oxford English Dictionary*, s. v. "toga," "sagum," "praetext," "bulla," and "laticlave").

72. Plutarch *Antony* XIV.

73. The French *honnête* has been uniformly translated as decent. Here the word translated *seemliness* is *décence* which has in this context to do with the kind of conduct dictated by social propriety, particularly in relation to women, and the world of gallantry. It is the refinement of the surface, the knowledge of the exquisite rules of the game. Rousseau, in an earlier manuscript, added after *seemliness*, "invented by the false delicacy of vice."

74. Aurelius Victor *De viribus illustribus Romae* 86.

75. "Nothing is difficult for him who wills."

76. Homer *Odyssey* XII 39–55, 192–200.

77. In the corrections for the later edition Rousseau strengthens his advice with the phrase: "he must go to bed only when ready to drop and get out of it the moment he wakes up." Cf. *Confessions*, *O.C.* I, pp. 16–17, 108–109; Everyman's I, pp. 11–13, 96–98.

78. Montaigne *Essays* I 26.

79. For Marcel cf. p. 139 above. Marcel takes the Englishman for a German noble from one of the states ruled by an elector. The book where Rousseau read the story is *De l'Esprit* (II 1) by Helvetius. It was the commonplace source of much of the philosophic thought criticized by the Savoyard Vicar.

80. Cf. p. 39 and n. 6 above and *Social Contract* I 6. Rousseau, out of republican pride, eschewed all titles of honor, civil or academic, and signed himself *Citizen of Geneva*. Paimboeuf is a town on the Loire.

81. For the later edition, Rousseau changed the title to *Essay on the Origin of Languages*. In that work he deals with this subject in chapters XIII–XIX.

82. "Stop, passerby, you are trampling on a hero." This was the epitaph of François de Mercy, defeated at the battle of Nordlingen in 1645 by Condé (with whom Emile's name may have some connection, cf. Preface, note 1). Cf. Voltaire *The Age of Louis XIV* III.

83. Strabo *Geography* XIV v 9.

84. Xenophon *Anabasis* II vi 30. "No one ever laughed at them as cowards in war or blamed them in friendship" is the exact text.

85. Herodotus *Histories* VII 228. "Passerby, tell the Lacedaemonians that here we lie obedient to their word" is the exact text.

86. This is the first sentence of Fontenelle's *Digression sur les Anciens et les Modernes* (1686). La Motte and Terrasson, in *Discours sur Homère* and *Dissertation Critique sur l'Iliade d'Homère* (1715) respectively, had joined in asserting the superiority of modern poetry over ancient. This was a minor skirmish in the "Battle of the Books," the "Quarrel between the Ancients and Moderns," a now forgotten struggle which pitted the totality of ancient philosophy, science, art, literature, politics, and morals against their modern counterparts. No issue is more important in the history of thought, and Rousseau emphatically takes the side of the ancients here, at least so far as literature and morals are concerned. No study of Rousseau can be serious which does not take seriously "The Quarrel."

87. Athenaeus *Banquet of the Sophists* I 12.

88. "Where there is something good, there is my fatherland."

89. Plutarch *Sayings of Kings* 178A–B.

90. Diogenes Laertius *Lives of the Philosophers* VIII 63; Montaigne *Essays* II 1.

91. "Name given to the taverns or roadhouses in the vicinity of Paris and other cities where the people go to drink and enjoy themselves on holidays" (translation of the Littré dictionary definition s. v. "guingette"). The gardens and the arcades of the Palais-Royal in Paris were the meeting-place of fashionable and corrupt Paris society. Cf. p. 141 above.

92. The remark is attributed to Aristippus by Diogenes Laertius and Athenaeus. Laïs was a celebrated courtesan of the fourth century B.C. who associated with the likes of Diogenes and Demosthenes as well as Aristippus. She is rumored to have been Alcibiades' daughter and she is mentioned in an epigram attributed to Plato. Cf. Diogenes Laertius II 75; Athenaeus XII 544, 535, XIII 588. Plato *Epigr.* Diehl 15. Rousseau mentions her again on p. 391 below.

93. "Golden mean." Horace *Odes* II x 5.

94. "Who can find a strong woman? She is far; brought from the ends of the earth, she is precious." This proverb introduces the last section of Proverbs which is devoted to the good wife.